ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development

2023-2024

Task Force Goals

To assist urban public school systems in teaching all students to the highest academic standards and in closing identifiable gaps in the achievement of students by race.

To improve the quality of professional development for teachers and principals in urban public education.

To alleviate the shortage of certified teachers and principals in urban schools.

To improve the recruitment and skills of urban school principals.

Task Force Chair

Deborah Shanley, Brooklyn College

Task Force Members

Jill Baker, Long Beach Superintendent
Rodney Jordan, Norfolk School Board
Sonja Santelises, Baltimore CEO

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Academics Overview

January 2024

Overall Academic Goals, Priorities, and Progress

The goal of the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) academic team is to support the work of urban educators to improve student achievement for all students in our member districts. The team collaborates with expert researchers and local practitioners to determine district systems and resources correlated with improved student achievement. These results inform recommendations to instructional leaders for implementation. The work of the academic team has been organized into five main areas, although work beyond those areas is also conducted.

Technical Assistance & Support	Professional Learning	Cross Collaboration	Annual Conferences & Taskforce Convenings	Strategic Support Team Visits
Facilitate content-specific role-alike meetings. Member Districts reach out directly for assistance via email, phone, or the communities.	Provide Professional Learning to districts through role-alike meetings, instructional spotlights, onsite professional development, and online modules.	Collaborate with role-alike groups during monthly meetings, conferences, publications, and external partnerships, researchers, and philanthropists.	Organize & Present at Annual Conferences with sessions targeting role-alike topics. Participate in Taskforce Convenings addressing major issues facing big-city school districts.	Conduct System-level Reviews providing recommendations for improvement and alignment to Strategic Plan Goals and Guardrails – by Superintendent Request ONLY.

We continue to share high-leverage information through publications and videos, provide virtual support and webinars, on-site strategic support team visits, facilitate role-alike monthly virtual meetings, and job-alike conferences to facilitate networking and collaboration among our members. We collaborate with other national organizations including Student Achievement Partners (SAP), Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), The National Academy of Education (NAEd), the Coalition for Advanced Future Student Success, the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES), and the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), the Hewlett Foundation, and the Gates Foundation in support of raising student achievement for all learners in our member districts.

Monthly role-alike meetings are focused on supporting districts as they continue to work on systematically improving student learning and achievement, including addressing unfinished learning during Tier I instruction, attending to the social, emotional, and well-being of staff and students, and developing and implementing high-quality curriculum and instructional materials, as well as creating more opportunities for cross-collaboration among district leadership to plan and implement coherent streams of support to schools. This past Fall 2023, the academic team began taking a deeper dive into the second edition of the *Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework*, released October 2023, with the role-alike groups and during the Instructional Spotlight in November.

Technical Assistance and Support

The CGCS academic team provides on-site and virtual technical assistance for district curriculum leaders and their teams throughout their curriculum development and implementation process. We customize our work for individual districts in determining implications for teaching and learning, curriculum development and refinement, implementation, and raising student achievement. Such technical assistance is available to member districts upon request. For example, the academic team is serving as a critical friend to Newark Public Schools instructional team by providing technical assistance on their updates and revisions to the district curriculum guidance based on changes in their state standards.

Member Inquiries

The academic team facilitated the receipt of responses to the following member inquiries and distributed them to the requesting district(s):
- Do state standards use some variation of the *C3 Framework*?
- What curriculum resources have districts adopted for elementary, middle, and high school social studies?
- What are your current practices in D/HH education? (Handbook, any guidance available?)
- How are districts working/instructing students that are deaf or hard of hearing?
- Request for updated/current Principal and People Manager Handbooks that cover resources, processes, policies, and such.
- Do districts conduct pilots when selecting new curricula resources and how other districts conduct pilots when selecting new curricula resources.
- Is your district currently using *Amplify Illustrative Mathematics*? For which grade levels?
- Use of *Elevate K12* for Teacher Shortages
- Professional Development Schedules
- Literacy Framework, Plans, and Strategy
- District Math Plans
- Samples of Elementary Report Cards
- ELA and Spanish Language Arts Literacy Curriculum
- District response to Israel and Hamas War
- Equity Policy Implementation

Academic Team Role-Alike Meeting Contacts

The Council of the Great City Schools continues to host and expand role-alike virtual meetings for member districts to provide a safe space to share effective practices, common challenges, and solutions for issues that impact the safety, wellbeing, and success of staff and students. If you would like more information about a role-alike meeting, please use the contact list below.

Meeting	Contact
Chief Equity Officers & Equity Directors	Farah Assiraj - fassiraj@cgcs.org
Chief Academic Officers	Nicole Mancini - nmancini@cgcs.org
Chief of Schools	Robin Hall - rhall@cgcs.org
Principal Supervisors	Robin Hall - rhall@cgcs.org

Special Education (SPED) Instruction & Compliance Directors and Legal Counsels working with SPED	Nicole Mancini - nmancini@cgcs.org Mary Lawson – mlawson@cgcs.org
Social-Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Restorative Justice Directors	Farah Assiraj - fassiraj@cgcs.org
English Language Arts & Literacy District Leaders	Robin Hall - rhall@cgcs.org
Mathematics District Leaders	Denise Walston - dwalston@cgcs.org
Science District Leaders	Denise Walston - dwalston@cgcs.org
History/Social Science District Leaders	Denise Walston - dwalston@cgcs.org
Early Learning Leaders (Birth to Pre-K)	Nicole Mancini - nmancini@cgcs.org

Professional Learning

Monthly Virtual Meetings and Quarterly Instructional Spotlights

Since March 24, 2020, instructional leaders (Chief Academic Officers (CAOs), Chiefs of Schools, Content Directors, Special Education Directors, Equity Leaders, Mental Health Leaders, and Social-Emotional (SEL) Leaders) have been invited to join monthly role-alike forums as a safe space for discussing challenges, promising practices, and sharing ideas with peers as they accelerate student learning while taking into account the social-emotional well-being of students and staff.

For SY23-24, the academic team included additional role-alike meetings for Principal Supervisors and Early Learning Leaders. Meetings for Principal Supervisors provide opportunities to share processes and protocols for supporting principals as instructional leaders, responding to culture and climate needs related to safety and well-being of staff and students, and overall school improvement. Bi-monthly meetings with Early Learning Leaders ensure high-quality, developmentally appropriate learning environments are meeting the daily needs of students Birth – Pre-K as well as ensuring a seamless transition into kindergarten. The topics for all role-alike meetings to date can be found below.

Monthly Meetings	
Chief Academic Officers **November 2023 -** Topic focused on systemic coherence, working collaboratively with their Chief of School(s), and challenges/barriers to ensuring coherence in Tier One Instruction. **December 2023 -** Chief Academic Officer joint meeting with the Chiefs of Schools and Principal Supervisors on the CGCS Dashboards facilitated by the CGCS Research Team.	**Chief of Schools** **November 2023 –** Discussion topics included: • Specific academic programs or initiatives that were prioritized or expanded that had significant impact on student growth and achievement. • Key goals and objectives in the next 1-3 years **December 2023 -** Chief of Schools joint meeting with the Chief Academic Officers and Principal Supervisors on the CGCS Dashboards facilitated by the CGCS Research Team.
Special Education (SPED) Directors and Legal Counsels working with SPED **November 2023 -** Discussion topic focused on best	**Principal Supervisors** **November 2023 –** Discussion topic focused on providing tiered support for principals and addressing teacher

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practices for Transition Services and legislative updates. **December 2023 -** Provided academic and legislative updates. Discussion topics included compliance with MTSS/RtI, evidence of best practices related to Tier 1 instruction for students with disabilities and cultivating inclusive environments.	shortages. **December 2023 –** Principal Supervisors joint meeting with the Chiefs of Schools and Chief Academic Officers on the CGCS Dashboards facilitated by the CGCS Research Team.
Chief Equity Officers & Equity Directors **November 2023 -** • Discussed The Role of Race in College Admissions Applications and other Supreme Court cases CGCS General Counsel team is monitoring. • District presentation by Ashford Hughes, Executive Officer for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from Metro Nashville Public Schools on *"Supporting Equity and Excellence in the Educational Lives of Black and Brown Boys".* **December 2023 -** Presentation by Dr. Mary Rice-Boothe, Executive Director, Curriculum Development & Equity with the Leadership Academy and discussion on equity resources developed to support Equity leaders in their roles.	**Social-Emotional Learning, Mental Health, and Restorative Justice Directors** **December 2023 -** Focused on connecting members roles and topics with a facilitated restorative justice circle.
English Language Arts & Literacy District Leaders **November 2023 -** District Spotlight: Metro Nashville Public Schools (Early Literacy) Problem of Practice: Wichita Public Schools (Secondary ELA) Look Inside the Classroom: e^2 Instructional Practice Learning Walk Tool	**Mathematics District Leaders** **October 2023 -** Highlight districts that have developed and communicated a strong vision of mathematics teaching and learning, made strategic changes in their mathematics program to address equity and access that resulted in improvements in student learning and achievement. **November 2023 -** Lessons learned on addressing unfinished learning just-in-time rather than just-in-case while helping students develop identity, agency, and voice in mathematics. Session facilitated by Ms. Kristen Gray, presidential awardee in mathematics. **December 2023 –** Reviewing student work products to uncover student understanding and discuss moving student learning forward using learning progressions.
Science District Leaders **October 2023 – November 2023 -** Criteria for high-quality instructional materials for high school science; pathways for students in science; STEAM careers; and integration of engineering design into science. Session facilitated by Dr. Joseph Krajcik (CREATE for STEM, Michigan State University). **December 2023 -** Debrief the sessions from October and November and discuss how high-quality resources can be	**History/Social Science District Leaders** **October 2023 -** Discuss how to elevate the level of student discourse while encouraging debate and illustrating multiple perspectives. Session facilitated by Dr. Robert Cooper, III, UCLA. **November 2023 –** Discuss how to create opportunities for young people to engage with political issues in a manner that embraces productive discomfort without descending into discord and animosity, engaging in civics even in this

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used as a lever to improve teaching and student learning.	contentious political climate. Session facilitated by Mr. Pablo Wolfe, Coalition of Civically Engaged Educators.

Bi-Monthly Meetings

Early Learning District Directors (Birth-Pre-K)

October 2023 – First meeting with Early Learning Leaders. Provided an overview of CGCS services to member districts, how to access the new community, and resources provided by the CGCS. Discussion topics included staffing support and recruitment strategies.

December 2023 – Rescheduled for January 2024.

To further guide district leaders with implementation of the *Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework (Second Edition)*, virtual learning opportunities, called Instructional Spotlights, are designed to provide focused professional engagement on highly relevant curriculum and instruction topics that our instructional leaders have surfaced as areas of interest and need. These quarterly Instructional Spotlights are aligned to and expand upon the key features in the CGCS *Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework (Second Edition)*. Topics range from addressing early literacy and early mathematics, civic reasoning, and discourse, grading for equity, to telling your data narrative. Presenters included national experts and member district leaders with in-depth experience in these topics. Providing opportunities for districts to share ways that they are operationalizing curriculum guidance so that teachers are using essential instructional content in ELA and Mathematics to plan for Tier 1 grade level instruction, including how to foster positive student mindsets. The first joint Quarterly Instructional Spotlight convened in November and focused on the Second Edition of the Supporting Excellence Framework.

Joint Quarterly Instructional Spotlight Meetings

November 16, 2023 - CGCS Academics Staff presented the newly released *Second Edition of the Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*. This second edition is organized by nine key features that undergird high-quality curriculum guidance capable of improving districtwide student achievement. Each key feature includes a description of why it is important and how it looks in practice, together with annotated exemplars from member districts appropriate for all college-and career- readiness standards.

We will continue to convene these professional learning role-alike meetings and compile additional resources as requested throughout the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year. Major topics continue to include:
- Addressing unfinished learning so all students can access Tier 1 grade-level instruction with just-in-time scaffolds and support.
- Creating coherence in MTSS between Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports in service of Tier 1 instruction.
- Emphasizing grade-level instruction for students, including English language learners and students with disabilities using culturally and linguistically relevant content and pedagogy.
- Promoting asset-oriented science and language learning with all students, including multilingual learners.
- Designing and implementing a continuum of social emotional learning and mental health support for students, families, and staff.
- Planning for and responding to instruction and compliance needs in Special Education to support students with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment.
- Considerations for strategic planning, investments, and project management in phasing out of ARP funding to sustain progress and district goals related to building staff capacity and accelerating student learning. (*Investing American Rescue Plan Funds Strategically and Effectively: Guidance for School Districts*)

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- Meeting the diverse needs of learners by focusing on their assets, abilities, skills, and utilizing various instructional strategies to engage learners, present content, and provide options for students to demonstrate understanding of content.
- Communicating effectively and navigating potentially divisive issues.
- Implementing equitable instruction in the core content areas of the K-12 instructional progression/continuum.
- Interrogating attendance, equitable grading, and promotion policies.
- Developing formative classroom assessments and discussing student work to inform instruction.

Science Units

The Council continues to collaborate with OpenSciEd to provide regular updates and reviews of their draft high school science units and during the development of elementary units. OpenSciEd is a project led by ten states and funded by four foundations committed to improving the supply of high-quality science curriculum aligned to new college and career ready standards. OpenSciEd provides the units free of charge and offers professional development for a fee. The high school level units are designed to address equity gaps in science by reorienting classrooms to be driven by phenomena while cultivating student interest and curiosity.

In addition, the academic team collaborated with the **C**ollaborative **R**esearch in **E**ducation, **A**ssessment and **T**eaching **E**nvironments for **STEM** (CREATE for STEM), at Michigan State University, to provide district science directors experiences with project-based learning materials designed to meet Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). These units, developed by writers of NGSS, applicable for high school chemistry and physics, are learner-centered, knowledge-centered, and assessment centered.

Mathematics Summit

The Council, in collaboration with the Institute of Educational Statistics (IES), the National Science Foundation (NSF), Council of Chief State School Officers, White House Office and Science and Technology, and the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), sponsored a virtual mathematics summit on September 12, 19, and 26, 2023. Registered participants could attend the free conference and access all recordings. Over three thousand participants attended sessions addressing six topical strands for the summit organized by grade spans, such as Pre-K-3 4-8, or 9-12. The topical strands included increasing opportunities to learn and raising expectations for all, strategies for differentiating instruction for diverse learners, high dosage tutoring and other academic recovery strategies, learning progressions and high school pathways, interdependence of language and mathematics (includes ELs), and technology and mathematics.

On September 12th, the first day of the conference, attendees traveled in space through the lens of Dr. Bernard Harris, the first African American astronaut, the opening speaker who set the tone for the IES Mathematics Summit. His message was one of hope and resilience, closing with the reminder that children "are infinite beings, with infinite possibilities." Following that, Lesley Muldoon, from NAGB, reminded us that "we must all be mathematics people." Dr. Peggy Carr, Commissioner, National Center for Educational Statistics, gave a frank presentation of students' mathematics achievement that indicated declines in mathematics had begun, even pre-pandemic. Representatives from Dallas Independent School District, Guilford County Schools, Denver Public Schools, and San Diego Unified Schools shared strategic stories of resilience that are creating opportunities to learn for all students. Members of the National Assessment Governing Board and state education leaders stressed the urgency and moral imperative for improving mathematics achievement for every child. The succeeding two days built upon this message of resilience and considerations about how to improve student achievement in mathematics. Whether attendees listened to NCTM President Kevin Dykema, or Dr. Francis Su, former president of the Mathematics Association of America, or Dr Steve Leinwand, American Institute of Research, all reminded

us that while we have work to do in mathematics education, we know what it is that we must do to enable all students to flourish.

The STEAM Career Expo sessions showed us just how powerful applying mathematics in K-12 classrooms can be. By engaging students in real-world, industry-centered lessons that focus on STEAM topics, we encourage students to see themselves as mathematicians, and empower them to persist in mathematics, because their diverse voices are desperately needed—we can give them the experiences to know they belong in STEM.

The Summit included more than 100 breakout sessions demonstrating different ways to engage students in meaningful learning by addressing the whole child and valuing the unique experiences and knowledge they can contribute to the classroom community. There were 3295 registrations and 3,640 platform interactions. Rebecka Peterson, the 2023 National Teacher of the Year from Tulsa Public Schools, reminded us in her session, "*The Poetic Truths of Calculus*," that students are "More than one moment." To help students recognize that they are more than a single moment, she suggested that we should think less like functions in algebra, and more like limits in calculus: "What limits have taught me, is to have grace for others and ourselves. Limits remind us that we are more than one mistake, and more than one accomplishment. Limits show us to look at the entire storyline."

Webinars

A three-part webinar that focused on translating the principles of Addressing Unfinished Learning into curriculum, instruction, pedagogy, and formative assessment. The Council and Student Achievement Partners developed and facilitated this series, along with experts and urban school district practitioners, to support and provide examples of implementing the principles of addressing unfinished learning. Key topics included: (1) how prioritized ELA/literacy and math content and addressing unfinished learning work in tandem as illustrated through unit design, tasks, and conceptual models, (2) successes and challenges in addressing unfinished learning while focusing on essential content, and (3) moving this work to scale. The recordings are available using this link.

During the 2022-23 SY, the Council completed three webinars in mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy to focus on how districts are translating the principles of addressing unfinished learning into practice. District leaders continue collaborating to share how curriculum guidance is being revised to infuse prior concepts directly connected to the progression of learning so all students can access grade-level content. The academic team plans periodic sessions on addressing unfinished learning and especially focuses on lessons learned along with supporting implementation with fidelity.

Cross Collaboration

The academic team has embraced cross collaboration internally and externally as referenced below:
- CGCS Chief Academic Officers, Chief of Schools, and Principal Supervisors attended a joint meeting with all three groups focused on The Council of the Great City Schools Dashboards facilitated by the Research Team: Akisha Osei Sarfo, Chester Holland, and Brian Garcia.
- The Chief of Academics attended the CIO/CTO monthly role-alike meetings to connect the educational implications of technology selection, implementation, and usage as well as advances in Generative AI and other tech-related educational topics with a focus on student outcomes.
- Collaborated with the Council's research team to plan and facilitate a session for the National Center for Educational Statistics on the NAEP item response analysis at their Assessment Literacy Workshop.
- Collaborated with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) to plan a Mathematics Summit to examine recent declines in mathematics proficiency and identify strategies to reverse those trends.

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- Facilitated two sessions for the Coalition for Advanced Future Student Success about the Mathematics Summit, shared lessons learned, and next steps.
- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners on the development of their *Essential x Equitable (e²) Instructional Practice Framework: Toward a vision for high-quality instruction* in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This resource is designed to emphasize essential grade-level mathematics and literacy content and includes an intentional focus on fostering instruction that creates belonging, agency, and strong identities as learners. It also supports educators in designing instruction that leverages the assets and honors the brilliance of students who have been historically underserved and marginalized by our education system—a crucial step in supporting all students.
- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners in the design and implementation of the Text Analysis Toolkit. Solicited feedback from directors of English Language Arts and literacy across member districts to refine criteria for text selection and support more rigorous, relevant, and engaging literacy instruction.
- Worked with Student Achievement Partners to review and provide feedback from directors of mathematics across member districts during the development of culturally responsive tasks for mathematics instruction.

Annual Conferences and Taskforce Convenings

The academic team debriefed the 2023 Fall Conference in San Diego identifying best practices for future conferences as well as the identification of districts effectively implementing innovative approaches to curriculum and instruction as well as addressing recruitment, retention, and staff shortages.

Plans are currently underway for the 21st Annual 2024 Curriculum, Research and Instructional Leaders Conference that will be held in Chicago, IL from July 8-11,2024 at the Westin Michigan Avenue. Districts will receive additional conference information in late January.

Strategic Support Team Visits

In January 2023, a CGCS strategic support team review, conducted by Ray Hart and Robin Hall provided a high-level review and evaluation of The School District of Philadelphia's Department of Academic Services organizational structure, job titles, and compensation and recommended changes that would align reporting structures, staffing, and compensation based on data from comparable school districts. To that end, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team comprised of current and former school district Human Resources, Finance, Research and Academic executives to conduct this review. The team provided actionable feedback to key district leaders and submitted a final report to the superintendent in April 2023.

In March 2023, a CGCS strategic support team review, conducted by Council staff Ray Hart, Robin Hall, and Farah Assiraj with support from CGCS member practitioners, provided a high-level review and evaluation of Little Rock School District's Academic Program with a focus on Multi-Tiered System of Supports and recommended changes that would align and enhance a rigorous teaching and learning program with expectations and support for all students. The team provided actionable feedback to key district leaders and presented a final report to the Board in June 2023.

In April 2023, a CGCS strategic support team review, conducted by Council staff Robin Hall and Farah Assiraj with support from CGCS member practitioners, provided a comprehensive review and evaluation of Aurora Public School District's Academic Program. The focus of the CGCS review was to assess the overall academic program, curriculum, and instruction in the district and provide recommendations for future actions to the APS leadership team. The CGCS team examined the district's common assessments, benchmarks, main screeners, and

diagnostic tools and how they are used to inform strategic decision-making and guide instruction. The team also looked at the alignment of the main assessment tools with state and national assessments and with the core curriculum. The team provided high-level feedback to key district leaders in April and May 2023.

In September and October 2023, a CGCS strategic support team review, conducted by Council staff Ray Hart, Nicole Mancini, and Mary Lawson with support from CGCS member Special Education practitioners, provided an in-depth review and evaluation of Washoe Public Schools Special Education Program with a focus on the Multi-Tiered System of Support process, curriculum and instruction, assessments, policies and procedures, professional learning, staffing, and placement service Pre-K through 12 as well as a review of alternative education centers. Recommended changes aligned to the district's new Strategic Plan focused on student outcomes and enhancements to provide rigorous teaching and learning based on the use of high-quality instructional materials and effective professional learning, with expectations and support for all students, were made. Actionable feedback to key district leaders and a final report is pending.

Tools, Resources, and Publications

Investing American Rescue Plan Funds Strategically and Effectively

This document lays out a framework for the nation's large city school systems to spend the new federal dollars strategically and effectively. It sets out overarching goals for the use of funds; articulates broad investment strategies; defines principles for the effective use of funds; and asks a series of questions that leaders and stakeholders should ask themselves as they embark on planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts. The document also draws on lessons learned from previous infusions of federal dollars and summarizes the main provisions of the federal legislation and agency guidance. **https://www.cgcs.org/Page/1283**

Now updated with Interim Progress Assessment Guides that provide guidance and support to school districts in assessing the investments related to instructional materials and resources. Districts can use this document in the ongoing process of investment planning, implementation, and oversight to ensure that federal relief funds are allocated strategically and effectively. Here is the link to the guides, including Investing in Instructional Resources and Student Support Services: **https://www.cgcs.org/Page/1430**

Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures

While this was released following school closures due to Covid-19, the academic team continues to provide guidance for implementing a districtwide approach to addressing unfinished learning in a just-in-time rather than a just-in-case model. The document emphasized that school districts would need to address the significant social and emotional toll the crisis has taken on children and widespread unfinished learning. We have always had students who entered a grade level with unfinished learning; however, our previous, well-intentioned attempts to use remediation programs had the impact of keeping students from engaging in grade-level content and resulted in their falling further behind their peers. We continue to highlight districts that are making progress in accelerating student learning and achievement in English Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics.

The document highlights key transition grades and illustrates how to focus on essential content for the grade. This approach provides the space and opportunities to address underlying unfinished learning just in time for all students to engage in grade level work, and acquire facility with language demands, skills, and concepts to

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accelerate their learning. To illustrate these approaches, the document provides examples of just-in-time scaffolds to accelerate student learning in mathematics and English language arts. **https://tinyurl.com/ya4g73f9**
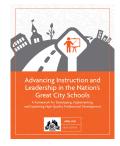
District Considerations for Universal Dyslexia Screening: Ensuring Appropriate Implementation and Instruction for English Learners

Many states across the country now have policies requiring districts to implement universal dyslexia screeners and/or processes that identify students at risk for reading difficulties and dyslexia. In response to Council members request for more guidance on the utilization of universal dyslexia screeners with English learners, a brief was developed. The purpose of this brief is to (1) share potential challenges regarding the implementation of universal dyslexia screening for English learners (ELs) and (2) highlight considerations that ensure English learners are appropriately screened given their language development trajectory and the foundational literacy instruction ELs have received. Furthermore, the brief offers considerations for the appropriate interpretation and use of screener results when districts are required to universally screen for dyslexia, including for students who have limited oral language development and little to no knowledge of English phonemes (e.g., when sound/letter correspondence differs between languages with different writing systems). This brief was released in November 2022. **https://www.cgcs.org/publications#35**

Professional Development Framework

This guide presents district instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what high-quality professional development entails. What makes this document different and useful is the focus on practical issues of district-level implementation in multiple teaching and learning environments. This is a guide designed by practitioners for practitioners, and it was important to the advisory committee and project team to develop a resource that provides clear, concrete guidance for district leaders based on our collective experience with best practices—and common pitfalls—in selecting, designing, implementing, and sustaining high quality professional development that not only represents what has traditionally worked in the past, but is nimble enough to meet the demands of the present.

The guide lays out a working definition of high-quality professional development, and then briefly reviews the research on what makes professional learning effective including lessons from the field. The framework then presents a set of preconditions and design principles of high-quality professional learning. These principles touch on the "why" (What is the purpose of professional development? How does it serve students, teachers, leaders, and the district as a whole?), the "what" (What knowledge or skills should professional development provide or focus on?), the "who" (Who are we targeting? Who should have access to professional learning opportunities, and who should be deployed to provide, support, and reinforce this professional learning?), and the "how" (How should professional development be structured, delivered, and evaluated to best improve instructional outcomes?). To illustrate these principles in action, the framework then provides a set of annotated exemplars from districts around the country. During SY 2023-24, the academic team will make explicit connections between this framework and the recently updated, *Supporting Excellence Framework* to support effective implementation of the curriculum. **https://www.cgcs.org/Page/660**

Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework, Second Edition

During the CGCS 2023 Annual Fall Conference in San Diego, CA, the Council shared the second edition of the **Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework** which includes additional areas of focus:

- Standards-aligned expectations for student work and writing.
- Instructional coherence within and across grade levels and learning environments.
- Culturally and linguistically relevant instruction.
- Current research and best practices on addressing unfinished learning, scaffolding, and support for diverse student populations (including English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, and gifted students).
- Addressing social-emotional learning and trauma.
- Expanded instructional use of technology.

The Curriculum Framework Advisory Committee comprised of Chief Academic Officers, curriculum leaders from the four core content areas, Bilingual Education, and Special Education from our member districts provided guidance and feedback during the revision process as well as national experts who served as technical advisors. **https://www.cgcs.org/curriculumframework**

Curriculum Quality Rubric

Based on the first edition of the *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum*, the Academic Team developed a rubric members can use to evaluate the quality of their curriculum guidance materials. The rubric was reviewed by members of the Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development during the 2019 CGCS Legislative Conference and by an advisory committee of Chief Academic Officers, curriculum leaders in mathematics, English Language Arts, Bilingual education, and Special Education from our member districts to provide additional feedback and test the rubric using their curriculum documents. The first version of the *Curriculum Quality Rubric: A Self-Assessment Tool for Districts* (**https://tinyurl.com/t8xh85hs)** is now in use in curriculum reviews. The academic team started revising the *Curriculum Quality Rubric* associated with the *Supporting Excellence Framework (Second Edition)* focusing on the newly included key features first, followed by revising the existing sections. The anticipated completion date is March 2024.

Academic Key Performance Indicators

The Council developed academic key performance indicators (KPIs) in a process like the one used to develop operational KPIs. Using feedback from the Achievement and Professional Development Task Force, indicators were selected for their predictive ability and linkage to progress measures for the Minority Male Initiative pledge taken from a list of 200 potential KPIs.

Since SY 2016-17, the indicators have been refined and are part of the annual KPI data collection and reporting. This now enables districts to compare their performance with similar urban districts and to network to address shared challenges.

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Resources from the Early Reading Accelerators Pilot

Recordings from a **three-part webinar series** from the Early Reading Accelerators Pilot in San Antonio Independent School district is available for district support and implementation of foundational skills instruction in the early grades. In this three-part series, hosted by the Council and Student Achievement Partners, experts and urban school district practitioners presented and discussed: (1) the latest findings about teaching foundational skills and making use of complex text as part of comprehensive literacy approach and (2) the pedagogy related to teaching foundational skills, including phonemic awareness to monolingual students and English Language Learners. The content of the recordings used the science of reading as the umbrella. The recordings for the series and additional resources are available using this link.

Important outcomes of the pilot were the increase in academic rigor and engagement in classrooms, more collaboration and cohesion on school campuses and within the district, instructional environments that became more culturally sustaining and visually rich, and re-ignition of the joy of teaching and learning literacy. This work continues to evolve as we partner with member districts in designing current early literacy plans. To learn more about the details of this pilot, use this link https://achievethecore.org/page/3360/shifting-early-literacy-practices to access the case study, ***Shifting Early Literacy Practices: The Story of an Early Reading Pilot in San Antonio Independent School District.***

Evaluation Tool-Quality Review

CGCS developed the following tools to help its urban school systems and others implement college- and career-readiness standards. These materials continue to be referenced and used by CGCS member districts and staff.

The Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool-Quality Review (GIMET- QR), (English Language Arts). A set of grade-by-grade rubrics and a companion document that define the key features for reviewers to consider in examining the quality of instructional materials in English Language Arts K-12. In addition, the tools are useful in helping teachers decide where and how adopted classroom materials could be supplemented. The documents align with similar tools developed by the Council for English language learners. See below. (2015) **http://www.cgcs.org/Page/483**

While GIMET-QR was designed to support textbook materials adoption, feedback from Council members using the tool indicates that there are additional uses:
1) to assess alignment and identify gaps/omissions in current instructional materials;
2) to assess alignment of district scope and sequence, and the rigor and quality of instructional tasks and assessments; and
3) to provide professional development that builds capacity and a shared understanding of the CCSS in ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics.

The Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool–Quality Review (GIMET- QR), (Mathematics). A set of grade-level rubrics and a companion document that define the key features for reviewers to consider in examining the quality of instructional materials in mathematics K-8. The key features include examples and guiding statements from the Illustrative Mathematics progression documents to clarify the criteria. (2015) **http://www.cgcs.org/Page/475**

While GIMET-QR was designed to support textbook materials adoption, feedback from Council members using the tool indicates that there are additional uses:
1) to assess alignment and identify gaps/omissions in current instructional materials;

2) to assess alignment of district scope and sequence, and the rigor and quality of instructional tasks and assessments; and
3) to provide professional development that builds capacity and a shared understanding of the CCSS in ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics.

The Text Analysis Toolkit: The Council and Student Achievement Partners partnered to provide CGCS ELA/ Literacy District Leaders opportunities engage in professional development of this toolkit. This toolkit aims to support educators in selecting and analyzing texts based on complexity and cultural relevance. The resources focus on tools for reflecting on the identities of educators and the students they serve, analyzing texts with multiple lenses, and considering implications for use in their specific context.
https://achievethecore.org/page/3369/text-analysis-toolkit

The Great City Schools Professional Learning Platform. A series of 10 video-based courses for school administrators and teachers to enhance language development and literacy skills for English Language Learners and struggling readers. (2018)
https://www.cgcs.org/Page/667

A Call for Change: Providing Solutions for Black Male Achievement. A book-form compendium of strategies by leading researchers that advocates for improving academic outcomes for African American boys and young men. Areas addressed include public policy, expectations and standards, early childhood, gifted and talented programming, literacy development, mathematics, college- and career-readiness, mental health and safety, partnerships and mentoring, and community involvement. (2012). **https://www.cgcs.org/domain/88**

Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners. A framework for acquiring English and attaining content mastery across the grades in an era when new college- and career-readiness standards require more reading in all subject areas. (2014, 2017) **http://tinyurl.com/yasg9xc4**

A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners. A guide for looking at the interdependence of language and mathematics to assist students with the use of academic language in acquiring a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics and applying mathematics in real world problems. (2016)
http://tinyurl.com/y7flpyoz

Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District Level Implementation of College and Career-Readiness Standards. A set of indicators districts might use to track their implementation of college- and career-readiness standards. Indicators are divided into seven sections, including: vision and goal setting, resource allocation, parent and community outreach, curriculum, and instruction, professional development, assessment, and student data. Each section provides descriptions of what "on track" or "off track" might look like, along with examples of evidence to look at in determining effective implementation. (2016) **http://tinyurl.com/hh6kesd**

Calendar of Questions. A series of questions about ongoing implementation of college- and career-readiness standards, arranged by month, focusing on aspects of implementation for staff roles at various levels of the district, as well as milestones for parents and students. (2013) These types of questions are still valid and can be customized for any districtwide project implementation. The Academic Department will be reviewing and updating this document with an anticipated completion date of December 2024. **http://cgcs.org/Page/409**

14

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK SECOND EDITION

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE

A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

SECOND EDITION

Council *of the* **Great City Schools**
THE NATION'S VOICE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 78 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research, instructional support, leadership, management, technical assistance, and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best education for urban youth.

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SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE

A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

September 2023

Council *of the* Great City Schools
THE NATION'S VOICE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Teaching and learning have changed substantially in recent years, driving the demand for more responsive curricular materials and guidance to help teachers address unfinished learning, boost student engagement, and meet the social emotional and mental health needs of students. While these learning necessities are not new, the pandemic served to highlight their fundamental role and connection to academic outcomes. Furthermore, the pandemic exposed the significant systemic and structural barriers to learning faced by marginalized populations and diverse learners that have been present for decades. These factors included physical barriers, such as a lack of proficiency or access to technology and the Internet, as well as barriers such as low expectations, limited communication between communities and schools, and outdated or culturally inappropriate curricular materials that limited student access to rigorous, grade-level instruction.

Developed through combined efforts of Council staff together with school district academic leaders and other experts, this 2nd edition of Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum is designed to help districts:

- Determine the quality and alignment of curriculum guidance to clarify the district's learning expectations at each grade-level with a focus on student assets and diverse learners;

- Ensure that curriculum guidance includes appropriate scaffolding and support for English language learners, students with disabilities, and historically marginalized students that is rigorous and aligned to district standards; and

- Provide support in the district's curriculum guidance for addressing unfinished learning during Tier I instruction that also attends to the social, emotional, and well-being of students.

Ray Hart
Executive Director

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PART I:
PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES, AND PRECONDITIONS

Overview

In the ongoing effort to improve standards-based instruction in our nation's urban public schools, the Council of the Great City Schools published a second edition of *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum.* This document is designed to help districts:

- Determine the quality and alignment of instructional guidance to clarify the district's learning expectations at each grade-level with a focus on student assets and diverse learners;

- Ensure that instructional materials for English language learners, students with disabilities, and historically marginalized students are rigorous and aligned to district standards; and

- Provide targeted professional development for teachers, principals, and district staff.

Teaching and learning have changed substantially in recent years, driving the demand for more responsive curricular materials and guidance to help teachers address unfinished learning, boost student engagement, and meet the social emotional and mental health needs of students. While these learning necessities are not new, the pandemic served to highlight their fundamental role and connection to academic outcomes. Furthermore, the pandemic exposed the significant systemic and structural barriers to learning faced by marginalized populations and diverse learners that have been present for decades. These factors included physical barriers, such as a lack of proficiency or access to technology and the Internet, as well as barriers such as low expectations, limited communication between communities and schools, and outdated or culturally inappropriate curricular materials that limited student access to rigorous, grade-level instruction.

This second edition provides instructional leaders and staff with a core set of criteria for what high-quality district curriculum guidance must entail in today's educational environment in order to ensure all of our school children meet the highest standards and become successful and productive members of society. With the help of instructional leaders from our urban districts and guidance from our expert panel, we have included additional key features with annotated exemplars from our member districts that reflect a focus on addressing unfinished learning during Tier I instruction, incorporating social and emotional learning, supporting culturally-relevant instruction, effectively employing instructional technology, and addressing inequities in access to grade-level instructional rigor. This second edition also provides actionable recommendations for developing, implementing, and continuously improving upon a district's curriculum, ensuring that it reflects shared instructional beliefs and high expectations for all students throughout the district.

Although this framework is grounded in college- and career-readiness standards, it does not repeat them except to provide clarity in the exemplars. The framework assumes the content taught using the curriculum will build background knowledge and academic language in core subjects but does not identify specific instructional strategies. The document also does not advocate a particular format for designing curriculum. Based on the level of expertise, knowledge of content and pedagogy of educators, and trends in student achievement, a district will need to determine the grain size (the level of detail needed to explain district expectations) for its curriculum guidance. Some districts may choose to provide an explanation of standards or include units of study, lesson plans, and/or pacing guides to support teachers in delivering effective instruction. Students' needs across our districts vary, so the framework provides guidance on meeting the needs of diverse learners, to ensure all students have access to high-quality instruction. It is essential that each district examine, monitor and utilize their student data for the district, by school, by grade, by subject, and by classroom to make appropriate instructional decisions ensuring that all students are able to access and learn grade-level content.

Defining Curriculum

In order to provide structure to this guide for developing and implementing a high-quality curriculum, the project advisory team developed the following definition:

A district curriculum is the central guide for teachers and all instructional personnel about what is essential to teach and how deeply to teach it throughout the district so every child has access to rigorous academic experiences and instructional and social emotional supports in meeting academic standards. It also provides guidance for all instructional staff who support and supervise teaching and student learning.

A district curriculum goes beyond a mere listing of standards, although it is based on the college- and career-readiness standards adopted from the state. However, it incorporates and articulates the additions the school system has made to more clearly translate the content knowledge, conceptual and procedural understanding, and social emotional skills students are expected to access, learn, and apply in multiple learning situations. The district's philosophy of what learning is essential, how students learn, and how to gauge student progress is central to the development of the curriculum. The curriculum itself explicitly indicates what the district values and requires (holds tightly) in every classroom and acknowledges where schools and teachers have autonomy.

The district curriculum is not a textbook, a set of materials, or a digital system. An effective curriculum does, however, identify and connect educators to resources that the district requires, and provides guidance in the selection and use of classroom resources to best leverage student strengths, including cultural and linguistic assets, and address diverse needs. The curriculum considers the time required to teach the essential content to all students. Feedback from users is incorporated in the development, revision, and implementation of the district curriculum to leverage teacher expertise and to ensure continuous reflection and refinement of the district's instructional principles and expectations.

The Purpose of a Quality Curriculum

The main purposes of developing a high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum are:

To prepare students for college and careers.

To support teachers in delivering effective instruction.

To ensure access, for all students, to rigorous, engaging, and meaningful grade-level educational experiences in every school and classroom throughout the district.

To provide students with just-in-time, and intentionally designed support and instruction enabling them to access grade-level content.

To engage students in high-quality learning experiences allowing them to demonstrate their agency and leverage their talents, skills, and cultural and linguistic assets.

The lack of a clear and well-implemented curriculum leaves teachers and administrators to individually determine what the district expects and leads to a variety of interpretations that may or may not be aligned with district expectations. This is especially detrimental in urban settings, where high staff turnover requires structures and mechanisms for maintaining the continuity of expectations. Moreover, high student mobility in urban centers presents the challenge of ensuring students do not miss key concepts by transferring from one school to another in the district, which can be mitigated by having common curriculum expectations across schools. Shifts to remote or hybrid learning reinforce how vital it is to ensure continuity of learning that meets the level of district expectations. Given the diversity of students and learning needs in our urban classrooms, there is also the need for clarity around how to differentiate instruction for students to attain their greatest potential while maintaining a high level of rigor, access to core content and standards for all students, and a sense of community and belonging.

Preconditions for Supporting a High-Quality Curriculum

A number of political, technical, and organizational preconditions are needed to support the development and implementation of a high-quality curriculum. In particular, a high-quality curriculum has the best chance of improving instruction systemwide if:

- The district has consistently communicated a strong, unifying vision for high-quality school and classroom practice that is founded on college- and career-readiness standards and high expectations for all students.

- The district has set clear, measurable goals for the academic attainment of all students.

- Curriculum guidance explicitly indicates what instructional decisions and mandates are to be made at the district level (i.e., what the district "holds tightly"), and where schools and teachers have autonomy in making decisions about what and how to teach.

- The district has provided equitable access to high-quality instructional resources, including technology.

- The district has a comprehensive professional development and implementation plan in place and communicates the message that not only teachers, but a wide variety of central office and school-based leaders and staff, are expected to develop the content knowledge and skills necessary to implement district college- and career-readiness standards within a supportive classroom environment.

- The district ensures that internally and externally provided professional development is consistent

with the district's instructional vision, aligned to college- and career-readiness standards, and prioritized and logically organized to address teacher needs.

- The district continuously works to build a culture of shared accountability, including processes to monitor student learning and achievement across central office departments, staff, and schools.

- The district has a system in place to inform modification, continuation, and evaluation of its curriculum guidance using evidence of student work and teacher feedback.

The most effective approach is one that tailors the level of central oversight to the needs of schools, based on where schools and the district are on the continuum of progress for all student groups. Some districts are highly centralized in their implementation of curriculum and instruction, while others give schools a high degree of autonomy in these areas. Districts need to strategically consider why and how their particular approach to school oversight is likely to improve instruction and advance academic achievement for all students based on staff capacity and student performance. In particular, if a district or school has low levels of achievement, a high degree of school-based instructional decision making is unlikely to provide the guidance and consistency necessary to improve student performance. Moreover, in those districts where schools earn greater autonomy through high achievement, this should not mean that such schools are free to determine instructional standards. The district should still lay out what skills and knowledge they expect all students to have, and high-performing schools should be given the latitude to build on these curricular expectations.

Finally, regardless of the management approach of a district, there must be checkpoints and measures for gauging whether the school system is on the right path in its instructional efforts. These measures should consist of a diverse set of indicators of student achievement and access to rigorous, grade-level content. The district should ensure that all formative, summative, and criterion-based assessments, as well as the systematic evaluation of student work, are aligned to the content and rigor of college- and career-readiness standards.

Principles for Design and Implementation

In developing and adopting curricula, districts often face many of the same challenges. These challenges range from the strategic to the tactical. For instance, a curriculum is unlikely to be implemented with fidelity across a school system if district leaders have not communicated why it is essential for all students or its importance as a driving force behind instructional improvement. Districts must

also ensure that teachers and instructional leaders share an accurate understanding of instructional expectations. At the same time, implementation can also be derailed if curricular materials are not aligned to the standards and easy to use, or if there are problems in the pace of instruction presented or in the distribution of materials, resources, or guidance. Whether the curriculum guidance takes the form of a hard copy or is housed on an electronic platform, it must be easily accessible, user-friendly, and immediately applicable for instructional staff. It is helpful to start with a shared understanding of the curriculum design principles and how it should be introduced and implemented in schools throughout the district. Specifically, a district curriculum should:

- ✓ Reflect the district's values and its philosophy of how students learn and what learning is essential at each grade level.

- ✓ Provide coherent instructional experiences that increase in complexity over time within and across grade-levels from pre-kindergarten through high school and systematically build student academic and social emotional readiness for college and careers.

- ✓ Address the trends in district data where large numbers of students are likely to have unfinished learning and provide teachers guidance for addressing those gaps, while leveraging student assets, in the context of grade-level instruction.

- ✓ Provide clarity on required and optional resources for all instructional staff, including those who support and supervise teaching.

- ✓ Provide teacher guidance on the importance of incorporating culturally responsive texts, tasks, and resources that respect and celebrate the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of students.

- ✓ Provide guidance on the many roles of technology to enhance grade-level teaching and learning across multiple learning environments.

- ✓ Articulate continuum of learning that delineates the content knowledge, academic language, and skills that should be taught, and at approximately what point during a school year, so students who transfer between schools have a coherent learning experience.

- ✓ Create the floor, not the ceiling, for learning at every grade level and in every course. In this way, the curriculum should support and challenge the full range of learners from struggling students to gifted and talented students.
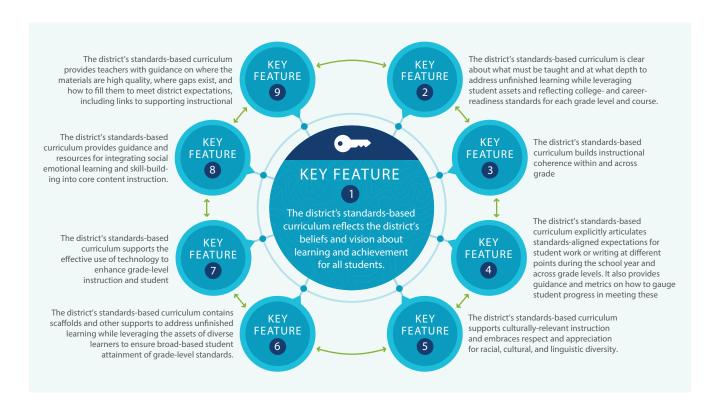
- ✓ Incorporate exciting learning opportunities within and outside school to keep students engaged as they learn challenging content, skills, and concepts.

- ✓ Address the importance of social-emotional learning opportunities that will increase student preparedness for rigorous learning experiences and collaborative tasks.

- ✓ Communicate why, when, and how to use assessments, including criterion-referenced, summative, and formative assessments, to determine how well students are progressing in attaining a particular standard or set of standards.

- ✓ Employ a two-way communication process in order to respond to feedback and meet evolving student and educator needs.

Structure of the Document

Part II of this *Supporting Excellence Curriculum Framework* is organized by nine key features that undergird high-quality curriculum guidance capable of improving districtwide student achievement. Each key feature includes a description of why it is important and how it looks in practice, together with annotated exemplars from our member districts appropriate for all college- and career-readiness standards.

As illustrated in the diagram below, the district's vision, mission, and beliefs undergird the Key Features, and all are interconnected. While all the Key Features are numbered, the order does not indicate a hierarchy nor level of importance.

The district's standards-based curriculum provides teachers with guidance on where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations, including links to supporting instructional

KEY FEATURE 9

KEY FEATURE 2

The district's standards-based curriculum is clear about what must be taught and at what depth to address unfinished learning while leveraging student assets and reflecting college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level and course.

The district's standards-based curriculum provides guidance and resources for integrating social emotional learning and skill-building into core content instruction.

KEY FEATURE 8

KEY FEATURE 3

The district's standards-based curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade

KEY FEATURE 1

The district's standards-based curriculum reflects the district's beliefs and vision about learning and achievement for all students.

The district's standards-based curriculum supports the effective use of technology to enhance grade-level instruction and student

KEY FEATURE 7

KEY FEATURE 4

The district's standards-based curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work or writing at different points during the school year and across grade levels. It also provides guidance and metrics on how to gauge student progress in meeting these

The district's standards-based curriculum contains scaffolds and other supports to address unfinished learning while leveraging the assets of diverse learners to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

KEY FEATURE 6

KEY FEATURE 5

The district's standards-based curriculum supports culturally-relevant instruction and embraces respect and appreciation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

Part III contains actionable recommendations and illustrations for developing, implementing, and continuously improving a district's curriculum guidance towards high academic expectations. Districts are strongly encouraged to conduct a crosswalk between their curriculum and the key features of a quality curriculum to determine the best entry point for curriculum revision. Our recommendation is to first examine if the district's beliefs and vision are inclusive of all students and if the curriculum provided is reflective of the vision.

This section is followed by a Study Guide that allows the reader to apply their understanding of the key features and ensure a shared understanding of these concepts.

Please note that each Key Feature is relevant to curriculum development; however, curriculum priorities must be based on the district's needs. Each district should leverage the resources provided here based on their district's context and vision about learning and achievement for all students.

PART II:

NINE KEY FEATURES OF A STRONG, STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

So, what do these defining principles of a high-quality curriculum look like in practice? In this section, we will provide concrete examples of district curricula that illustrate a set of nine key features of quality and alignment. In particular, we aim to illustrate how and when:

1 The district's standards-based curriculum reflects the district's beliefs and vision about learning and achievement for all students.

2 The district's curriculum is standards-based and clear about what must be taught and at what depth to address unfinished learning while leveraging student assets and reflecting college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level and course.

3 The district's standards-based curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels and learning environments.

4 The district's standards-based curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work or writing at different points during the school year and across grade levels. It also provides guidance and metrics on how to gauge student progress in meeting these expectations.

5 The district's standards-based curriculum supports culturally-relevant instruction and embraces respect and appreciation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

6 The district's standards-based curriculum contains scaffolds and other supports to address unfinished learning while leveraging the assets of diverse learners to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

7 The district's standards-based curriculum supports the effective use of technology to enhance grade-level instruction and student engagement.

8 The district's standards-based curriculum provides guidance and resources for integrating social emotional learning and skill-building into core content instruction.

9 The district's standards-based curriculum provides teachers with guidance on where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations, including links to supporting instructional resources.

KEY FEATURE ①

The district's standards-based curriculum reflects the district's beliefs and vision about learning and achievement for all students.

Why is this important?

A district's beliefs and vision for student learning and achievement are only effective as a driving force for instruction if they are understood and embraced by teachers, principals, and other school-level staff and leaders. The district's standards-based curriculum is therefore a critical opportunity for the district to affirm and communicate its commitment to educational equity, high standards, and respect for the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students. It is only when teachers and administrators clearly understand the value placed on these principles and readily see how their work is connected to the overall mission of the organization that a district's instructional vision can be translated into everyday classroom instruction.

What does it look like?

The standards-based curriculum should both explicitly and implicitly reflect a district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement. For example, the introduction to a curriculum document should specifically reference a district's mission statement and guiding principles, and indicate how classroom instruction is directly linked to those ideals. The curriculum should also explicitly link to the district's strategic activities and goals.

Moreover, a district's beliefs and standards need to be *implicitly* reflected in the curriculum through rigorous texts, assignments, and lessons. Mixed messages can occur when curriculum documents exhort teachers to hold all students to high standards, but then provide low level instructional programming, materials, and tasks for student learning that contradict this vision for rigorous instruction.

Prior to designing new curriculum guidance, curriculum writers should carefully review the district's beliefs and vision and establish criteria as they develop their guidance to ensure alignment. Each suggested activity and exemplar of student work should then be checked to see that they align with and support high instructional standards.

The document should also provide support to instructional staff to attain those goals. The curriculum needs to not only reflect higher expectations, but also provide guidance on how to advance students who have not been challenged in prior grades, so they can make the necessary progress in their academic language, reading, and reasoning skills. If the district believes students learn best in a particular way, then curriculum examples should reflect those approaches.

Example 1: English Language Arts
District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)

The District of Columbia Public School's vision is to ensure "every student feels loved, challenged, and prepared to positively influence society and thrive in life." To this end, the DCPS standards-based curriculum across grade levels is designed to engage students and develop their ability to think critically and make sense of their community and the world. District Visions is a language arts curriculum written by DCPS teachers and managed by the DCPS secondary literacy team (part of the Office of Teaching and Learning). The following unit reflects the district's mission and beliefs that "every school guarantees that students reach their full potential through rigorous and joyful learning experiences in a nurturing environment."

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 8
Why is this an example of Key Feature 1?	The curriculum is built around four core principles that reflect the district's vision, mission, and beliefs. The curriculum is designed so that teachers can leverage resources, build on student assets, and adapt to meet their students' individual needs. The lessons in the curriculum focus on inquiry and investigation which harness the power of well-crafted questions to build students' knowledge and critical thinking skills. DCPS identifies three levers of change to improve student achievement: highly effective educators, rigorous academic content, and engaged families and motivated students. The district is committed to ensuring that students throughout the district have comparable and rigorous learning experiences.
Structure of the Exemplar	The curriculum guidance provides units of study that are aligned to specific standards in literature, informational texts, writing, speaking and listening, and language. This guidance also delineates the integration of culturally-responsive pedagogy, social emotional learning, and approaches to teaching sensitive subjects in context. Each unit of study includes essential questions and enduring understandings specific to the unit. The guidance equips teachers with the tools and intellectual preparation they need to deliver high-quality learning experiences for all students.
Additional Resources, continued	• The Power of Text Sets • Anchor Text Audio Recording • ELA Supplemental Materials PlayPosit Bulbs for differentiation

FIGURE 1.

ELA 8
Unit 4 Overview

The DCPS curriculum provides teachers the tools they need to effectively address specialized learning needs, unfinished learning, and leverage student assets, while celebrating cultural and linguistic differences.

Unit Learning Trajectory	This unit will challenge students to explore the concept of community and how the life experiences of individuals connect to form a community. Through a thorough study of fiction and non-fiction texts, students will come to understand that community is comprised of both physical and nonphysical elements. They will also reflect on and discuss the ideas that (1) the life experiences of individuals impact a community, (2) community includes both topography and humanity, and (3) empathy for and understanding of others is essential for a community's survival. After gaining a thorough understanding of community, students will transform into social activists as they investigate ways to enact positive change in their communities. Students will read the novel, *145th Street Short Stories*, by Walter Dean Myers, to explore how stories of individual human experiences connect all of humanity. Each focal passage from *145th Street Short Stories* is included in a thematic text set with other prose and/or poetry that explore various aspects of the human condition. These text sets allow students to delve deeper into examining how community impacts individuals and how the emotions and experiences of individuals connect to impact a community. They include poetry, informational texts, short stories, and an audio clip. This unit will also challenge students to continually make text-to-text connections as they read the combination of texts. Further, this unit's Cornerstone provides students with the opportunity to take a critical look at their own communities and develop and implement a grassroots campaign to address an area of concern. Students reflecting on themselves as evolving writers is another vital component of this unit. In addition to crafting two original pieces of writing, students will revisit one of their writings from a previous unit to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Through this process, students will (1) gain insight about who they are as writers and (2) refine their writing skills. Students will demonstrate mastery of speaking and listening skills during the Cornerstone experience, where students will develop grassroots campaigns, workshop the campaigns for feedback, and present their campaigns to their peers. The unit is organized into 6 phases that guide teaching about community, from the discussion of how the experiences of individuals create community to how students can become agents of change in their own communities.

Essential Questions	• How am I impacted by my community? • How can I impact my community? • How does an author use the story of an individual to connect all of humanity? • How does reflection and revision improve my writing and my confidence in my writing?
Enduring Understandings	• The life experiences of individuals impact a community. • Empathy for and understanding of others is essential for a community's survival. • Youth have ability to be positive change agents in their community.

The essential questions and enduring understandings build depth of understanding and real-world applications. The unit learning experiences help students learn how they can become agents of change in their own communities. This relates to the district's vision that every child is prepared to positively influence society and thrive in life.

	Reading: Literature	Reading: Informational Texts	Writing	Speaking & Listening	Language
Recurring Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	RL.8.4, RL.8.10	RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.4, RI.8.10	W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.6, W.8.9, W.8.10	SL.8.1, SL.8.6	L.8.2c, L.8.4, L.8.6
Unit 4 Focal Standards	RL.8.4, RL.8.5, RL.8.9	RI.8.4, RI.8.5	W.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5	SL.8.4, SL.8.5, SL.8.6	L.8.1, L.8.2, L

Unit text sets provide a variety of genres from anchor to supporting texts that deepen students' understanding and lead students to mastering assessment tasks in each phase of the unit. Joyful learning experiences are created by connecting rich content to students lives and communities.

Unit Texts
Overview

Students will read the texts listed below during this unit. Optional texts are highlighted in yellow; all other texts listed on this page are required reading for students. Teachers may utilize the optional texts to further enhance this unit if time permits.

Common Core Band Lexile Text Difficulty Ranges for Grades 6-8: 955L-1155L

Text	Instructional Use	Source
Anchor Text(s)		
145th Street: Short Stories by Walter Dean Myers	Anchor Text	Print
Informational Text		
"Race is a Social Concept, Not a Scientific One" By Michael Hadjiargyrou	Introducing the Unit	Canvas
"The Child's View of Working Parent" from *Fortune* by Cora Daniels	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change by Shawn Ginwright, Pedro Noguera, and Julio Cammarota	Close Reading Module	Canvas
Poetry and Fiction Texts		
"I've heard said" by Julia Alvarez	Introducing the Unit	Canvas
"Human Family" by Maya Angelou	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"The World Is Not a Pleasant Place to Be" by Nikki Giovanni	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"Vade Mecum" by Billy Collins	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"Those Who Don't" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros	Introducing the Unit	Canvas
"Papa Wakes Up Tired in the Dark" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"Salvador Late or Early" from *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories* by Sandra Cisneros	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
"Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
The Parable of the Good Samaritan	Supporting the Anchor Text	Canvas
Audio/Visual Texts		
NPR's Morning Edition "Good Samaritan"	Supporting the Anchor Text	Link

The Role of Varied "Leveled" Texts and Potential Suggestions

The Power of Text Sets: An easy, research based and fun way to become a strong reader

What is a text set? Text sets are intentionally grouped sets of texts and media resources focused on a specific topic designed to help all learners build background knowledge and vocabulary through a volume of reading on science, social studies, and other high-interest topics.

Why use a text set? There are so many reasons to use a text set. Here are just a few:

- To allow student voice and choice for independent reading. Students can select topics that interest them, that connect to and relate to their lives, or that will give them new perspectives.
- To build knowledge about the topic of an anchor text (before, during, or after reading) in order to enrich that reading experience. For example, students can build their knowledge of the time period of a historical fiction text or the setting of a text that takes place in a potentially unfamiliar habitat or location.
- To support science and social studies content through reading. Students can learn about the world around them including social issues, current events, or the past through topically connected texts.
- To support authentic writing and research. Students can keep track of new knowledge and the vocabulary they are learning.

This section illustrates the core principle of equitable access to "a world-class educational experience" and challenging, grade-level work. Consistent structures, supports, and resources ensure that all students have access to outstanding learning opportunities. Texts in a text set may be below-, at-, or above-grade level according to quantitative and qualitative complexity, and relationship to reader and task.

The district illustrates their commitment to holding students to high standards by providing curriculum that is aligned to college-and career-readiness standards as well as local and state assessments.

Phase 4, Close Reading Module	See Canvas Module 4.11 Approximately 3 Days

Texts: *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change* by Shawn Ginwright, Pedro Noguera, and Julio Camarota

Students will be able to...
- Closely read a text stopping to synthesize central ideas through stop and jots, turn and talks and annotations, summary, etc. (RI.8.1, RI.8.2)
- Define and understand unknown words in context to better comprehend texts. (L.8.4)

Phase 4 Assessment Prompt: Explain the importance of young people being viewed as individuals who "produce knowledge to transform their world" in a positive way by adults. Support your response with evidence from the text.

The curriculum guidance includes common tasks aligned to the anchor standards to ensure that every school provides students with rigorous and joyous learning experience in a nurturing environment. The guidance identifies the essential tasks required for the unit but encourages teachers to add additional formative assessments as appropriate.

Unit Task List

Included in this Task List are the Essential Tasks in this unit aligned to the Focal Anchor Standards and curricular culminating tasks. Each task is listed on the Unit Planning Calendar (below) and teachers are encouraged to add formative tasks and assessments, as is appropriate. This Task List can also be provided to students as they track their progress through the unit.

Categories include: "Application" and "Formative Assessment"

Module	Task	Category	Points	Due	Done (þ)	Grade
4.1	**Texts:** Student Writing Portfolio **Prompt:** In a well-organized essay, explain how you have developed as a writer over the course of the school year. Your essay should address: weaknesses you overcame as a writer this year, your current strengths as a writer, the activities, discussions, and/or peer and teacher feedback that changed you as a writer, aspects of your current writing you like best.	Formative Assessment	10			
4.2	**Texts:** "I've heard said" & "Those Who Don't" **Prompt:** Select one text and respond to the following questions. How does the author convey their understanding of community? How does the text structure contribute to the meaning of the text?	Formative Assessment	10			
4.3	**Texts:** "Big Joe's Funeral" & "Human Family" by Maya Angelou **Prompt:** Compare the views of community and connection in the two texts. Explain how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning.	Formative Assessment	10			
4.4 RCT 7	**Text:** "Those Winter Sundays" **Prompt:** (1) Write an objective summary of the poem. (2) Analyze the author's use of imagery and details to reveal the speaker's attitude towards his father.	Assessment	20			

Example 2: Mathematics
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Similarly in Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District (CMS), the district's mission is to create an innovative, inclusive, student-centered environment that supports the development of independent learners. This exemplar reflects attention to meeting district-wide expectations for students while meeting the individual needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners. This curriculum design also embeds both instructional supports, especially mathematics language routines, and ESL instructional supports within the Math 1 curriculum.

cms
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Content Area and Grade	Math 1 High School
Why is this an example of Key Feature 1?	The excerpt below from the introduction to the Math 1 curriculum provides teachers with an understanding of the district's beliefs and mission for student achievement— a mission that embodies equitable mathematics teaching and learning and supports student voice and agency. Each unit is focused on the major themes in algebra including how to create a positive classroom climate and strong classroom community, safety to take risks and make mistakes, and student growth in their understanding of mathematics, and their attitudes about the field of mathematics. In addition, the Language and Learning Acquisition department worked with the curriculum resource provider to integrate additional supports for the adopted textbook to meet the needs of English learners.
Structure of the Exemplar	There is an introduction to the Math 1 course which provides an overview of what students will experience throughout the year. The exemplar has students engaged in math tasks and activities with increasing levels of complexity, reflecting the district's vision of creating learning environments that are cognitively demanding and require persistence. This exemplar also promotes collaboration and engagement activities, and features two types of ESL instructional supports.

The overview of the Math 1 curriculum provides teachers with an understanding of the district's beliefs and vision for student learning and achievement—a vision that embodies equitable mathematics teaching and learning and supports student voice and agency.

FIGURE 2.

Math 1

Woven throughout Math 1 are experiences for students and stakeholders to examine ideas of social justice, engage in current events, and expand and apply mathematics into everyday life. Reflection, student voice and agency, and high expectations are critical components of this curriculum. As a result, students consistently have opportunities to dig deeper into their worldviews and their identities as mathematicians. It is important to note that some of the topics may encourage passionate conversations and debate among students. Teachers should discuss these opportunities for student discourse during their planning meetings and recognize these possibilities when implementing the curriculum in their own classroom, leveraging their strong classroom cultures and inclusive classroom environments.

This example connects to the district's theory of action, mission, and vision statement.

Embedded strategies include different math language routines that allow all students to access grade-level content that meets district expectations.

An additional scaffold helpful for some students to engage in "Notice and Wonder" could be sentence frames, such as "I notice that…" or "I wonder about…"

Activity 1: What Is Math 1? (*10 minutes*)

Instructional Routine: Notice and Wonder

The purpose of this activity is to provide students an opportunity to see what topics are included in Math 1 and informally share with the class what topics they may already have some experience with from earlier courses or from their own life experiences.

This is the first time in the course that students will participate in a *Notice and Wonder* routine.

NOTICE AND WONDER

What Is This Routine? Students are shown some media or a mathematical representation. The prompt to students is "What do you notice? What do you wonder?" Students are given a few minutes to think of things they notice and things they wonder, and share them with a partner. Then, the teacher asks several students to share things they noticed and things they wondered; these are recorded by the teacher for all to see. Sometimes the teacher steers the conversation to wondering about something mathematical that the class is about to focus on.

Why This Routine? The purpose of the *Notice and Wonder* routine is to make a mathematical task accessible to all students with these two approachable questions. By thinking about them and responding, students gain entry into the context and might get their curiosity piqued. Taking steps to become familiar with a context and the mathematics that might be involved is making sense of problems (MP1).

Activity 1: Broad Jump Distances: Histogram (*15 minutes*)

Instructional Routine: Collect and Display (MLR2) - Responsive Strategy

Building On: NC.6.SP.4

Building Towards: NC.M1.S-ID.2

The mathematical purpose of this activity is to represent and analyze data with histograms. Students will create two different histograms from the same data set by organizing data into different intervals.

Step 1

- Ask students to form pairs or use visibly random grouping.

- Students work through the activity for 5–10 minutes.

Advancing Student Thinking: Students may struggle to know how to place numbers that lie on the boundary between intervals. For example, students may not know if a value like 160 should be included in the interval 150–160 or 160–170. Explain to students that the lower boundary value is included in the interval, and the upper boundary value is not. For example, the interval 160–170 includes all the values that are greater than or equal to 160 and less than 170.

RESPONSIVE STRATEGY

As groups work, circulate and listen to student talk about the similarities and differences between the types of data collected. Write down common or important phrases you hear students say about each type onto a visual display (e.g., "these are all numbers" or "this only has one answer"). Collect the responses into a visual display. Throughout the remainder of the lesson continue to update collected student language and remind students to borrow language from the display as needed.

Collect and Display (MLR2)

This is used to illustrate and connect the progression of learning standards across grade-levels/courses.

The district has ESL instructional support built-in called a responsive strategy. These supports are denoted by the purple boxes seen in the margins of pages in the teacher manuals. These scaffolds support the development of academic language and provide access for all students—reflecting the district's vision and mission.

Note the concrete guidance for teachers to engage in peer coaching to embrace student dissent and discussions.
This creates the conditions for success and advances the district's mission to create independent learners. Additionally, the guidance identifies typical misconceptions and lingering questions that students may have during the instructional process. Providing this information ensures access and high levels of learning for all students.

KEY FEATURE 2

A district's standards-based curriculum is clear about what must be taught and at what depth to address unfinished learning while leveraging student assets and college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level and course.

Why is this important?

Curriculum leaders have the advantage of examining the pre-kindergarten through grade twelve curriculum from a broad perspective. They know what standards have come before and what is coming next. Based on walk-throughs, student work, and districtwide student achievement data, they can also identify patterns in the assets and needs of learners—including common areas or signs of unfinished learning— to address the aspects of a standard or learning expectation that need to be clarified or where just-in-time instruction will likely be necessary to keep students on grade level.

It is critical that this overarching knowledge and understanding of what must be taught, and at what depth, is shared with teachers through clear and explicit curriculum guidance. Clarifying district expectations for what is essential learning at each grade level creates the basis for building shared understanding of where to focus teaching efforts. This common ground ensures that all students in every classroom and in every school have access to the same concepts, knowledge, and skills they will need to meet district expectations and succeed in higher grade levels and courses. Without such clarity, individual teachers and school planning teams may misinterpret the meaning or purpose of grade-level standards. This can create and expand inconsistencies in instructional rigor and gaps in student learning—gaps that become increasingly evident as students move into higher grade levels.

Given the challenge of widespread unfinished learning in the aftermath of the pandemic and school closures, it is important to identify what learning is essential in each grade and subject to prepare students for future academic work. Problems in student achievement in Algebra I, for example, might be traced to incomplete or unclear coursework and instruction in elementary school concepts that teachers could have taught, but did not realize that they needed to.

What does it look like?

Curriculum guidance should articulate learning expectations by grade level and subject in a way that is clear enough to avoid confusion or misconception. A mere listing of curriculum standards is insufficient. Finding the right level of granularity to ensure that district curricular expectations are clear is a district decision that must be made based on the content expertise and skill level of the end users. A district with high teacher turnover rates, for instance, may choose to provide more detailed guidance and direction than those with a stable, experienced teaching force.

Quality curriculum guidance also alerts teachers to typical student misconceptions and incomplete learning based on student performance in previous years, and how to address them by leveraging student assets from prior grade levels while simultaneously working on grade-level concepts and skills. This is especially important for meeting the needs of diverse learners and students who have been marginalized or excluded from accessing grade-level standards and learning environments.

Example 3: English Language Arts

To illustrate how a district could provide clarity not only around what needs to be taught, but at what depth, we have developed the following sample unit overview based on a template from a member district. We start by describing a key grade four English language arts standard and how instructional rigor and student understanding should build over the course of the year. To assist teachers as they work with students to make meaning of this content, the overview then addresses strategies and things to consider before teaching, during teaching, and after teaching (assessment considerations). This document also lays out the connections to the overall goal of college-and career-readiness for all students.

However, it is important to note that the level of detail and guidance provided here assumes a fair amount of expertise in the standards. For example, when we refer to the use of "text-dependent questions," we are assuming that teachers are skilled in the concept and use of this instructional practice. A district that has not provided substantial professional development in the instructional shifts called for by college- and career-readiness standards may want to consider providing an even more detailed description or pairing the unit overview with more explicit guidance on this concept.

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 4
Why is this an example of Key Feature 2?	This curriculum guidance describes a key grade four standard (comparing the points of view of different narrators, including the difference between first-and third-person narrations) and how instructional rigor and student understanding should build over the course of the year.
Structure of the Exemplar	After presenting and describing the standard, this exemplar provides teachers with a section on using prior knowledge to make connections, a section on Acquisition and Applications divided up by knowledge and skills, and a section on making meaning, both before and during instruction. This ensures that all aspects of the standards that the district intends are there for all teachers to guide them in focusing their instruction.
Additional Resources	*Placing Text at the Center of the Standards-Aligned ELA Classroom.*

FIGURE 3.

RL 4.6 Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first-and third-person narrations.

This standard can be addressed as a natural complement to other standards and an extension of learning from prior grades. In grade four, students are expected to refer to explicit details when explaining the meaning of what they have read or when they are making inferences based on information from the text.

As they progress through this school year, students will respond to a range of questions that require them to use their knowledge and skills in finding key ideas and

Using prior knowledge to make explicit connections to new learning

In grade three, students learned how to distinguish their own point of view in a text from that of the narrators or those of characters. (CCSS RL. 3.6) Students have also learned that point of view is how the author feels about a particular topic (for/against, pro/con).

Acquisition and Applications

KNOWLEDGE

Students will build their awareness of how author's use of language and writing structures impact the reader and reveal the author's point of view about a character or topic.

SKILLS

Students in grade four will be able to:

- Recognize the author's point of view by attending to what the characters say and do and the word choices the author makes.

This summary of grade three work helps to clarify the depth expected for grade four instruction and student learning.

Here the district lays out a systemic set of learning expectations, and the essential knowledge and skills they expect students to develop at this grade level.

details in order to analyze the author's language as a vehicle for conveying meaning in increasingly challenging texts.

This year students not only answer questions and complete tasks that will require them to compare and contrast points of view—both the author's stance on issues as revealed in statements and word choices (Grade 3), they must also note the difference between first-and third-person narrations in literary texts. (CCSS RL 4.6)

Now, the fourth grade teacher is building on this prior learning and expanding the concept of point of view to include first- and third- person narration.

Also, the students' ability to distinguish their own points of view from that of the author is further extended to learning how to compare and contrast points of view from different stories.

Reaching proficiency of this standard is not a small step but requires a series of instructional experiences that include all of the strands—reading, writing, speaking and listening and language—in the teaching and learning process.

Using read-alouds to

KNOWLEDGE, *continued*

- Students will know that different narrators can present the same events in different ways

- First-person narrator describes his/her own thoughts and feelings and may take part in or retell an event as if he or she was a participant.

- First-person narration uses I, me, my, and we. (Note: Show students the difference between when a narrator is speaking versus when a character's words in dialogue use the pronoun "I". (e.g., I was so surprised to see the wonderful gift before me. Versus, Tom said, "I was so surprised to see the wonderful gift before me.").

- Third-person narrator describes how other characters think and feel and does not take part in an event.

- Third person narration uses a named person or the pronoun, he, she, they, him, or her.

- Understand the effect of the author's choice to write in first person or third person narration.

SKILLS, *continued*

- Recognize the author's viewpoint revealed in the information he/she chooses to provide or omit and the word choices the author makes.

- Distinguish between what it means to make comparisons and contrasts.

- Distinguish and cite examples of how the author's selection of first or third person narrative impacted the student as a reader, to show that they understand the advantages and disadvantages of the writer's choice.

- Use accurate vocabulary and academic language in summaries or other writing assignments to compare and contrast points of view in the texts under discussion.

- Evaluate the use of accurate vocabulary in summaries or other writing assignments students write to compare and contrast points of view in the texts under discussion

- Use evidence from the text for how the character thinks and feels as the story progresses.

- Use small groups for peer editing before revision and final drafts.

These bulleted notes alert teachers to areas where students commonly experience confusion. This guide for learning will prevent future misconceptions.

These statements provide clarity on what must be taught at each grade level.

model and provide examples of how to analyze first- and third-person narrations and use them as springboards to comparing and contrasting points of view—using text dependent questions that draw students back to the text—will provide the practice and scaffolding needed for all students to reach proficiency of this standard.

Graphic organizers can also be used to help students organize and structure their thoughts and evidence from the text to support their responses.

Here, the curriculum builds a shared understanding of where to focus teaching efforts.

SKILLS, *continued*

- Write a story from the view point of one of the characters in the texts.

Helping Students Make Meaning

BEFORE TEACHING

- Select two texts on a particular topic or theme that share similar big ideas and understandings—one with first-person narration and the other with third person narration.

- Note stopping points in the texts that are key for determining author's point of view and create text-dependent questions that will require students to provide evidence from the text to support their responses.

- Note stopping points in the texts that will enable teachers to draw attention to the impact of the author's word choice. This is helpful to monolingual and multilingual learners.

Text-dependent questions for reaching proficiency in this content standard require students to:

- Determine the point of view of the author (for/against, pro/con, and provide examples from the text that support their conclusion.

  - Provide key details from the texts that support comparisons.

  - Recognize key details from the texts that support contrasts.

Depth of Knowledge: The tasks are designed to extend student reasoning through discussions and structured readings to demonstrate their understanding of comparison and contrast.

DURING TEACHING

- Provide models of comparisons and contrasts of points of view in student work or other instructional materials.

- Provide opportunities for multiple readings of both texts separately through structured reading and discussion of student responses to text dependent questions. (A variety of methods can include: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, small group, etc.).

- Structure discussions and writing opportunities so that students meet this content standard.

- Use graphic organizers or other visuals to structure/record discussions regarding comparison and contrast of the author's point of view in both texts (i.e. A Venn diagram or table can be constructed easily and provides reinforcement for content learning).

- Provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their level of understanding and achievement of the standard (i.e., create a grid with multiple columns and rows to create side-by-side comparisons of multiple texts on the same topic, event or experience noting similarities and differences in points of view; compare communication in different forms such as contrasting a dramatic performance with a print version of the same story and variants in points of view).

Example 4: Mathematics, K-2
Baltimore City Public Schools

In this curriculum guidance excerpt in mathematics, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) has incorporated public domain materials from Illustrative Mathematics, as well as the CGCS Parent Roadmaps and Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (GIMET-QR). They have customized this information to provide their K-2 teachers with an overview of the progression in addition and subtraction problems.

The district shows teachers the growing sophistication in the problem types from kindergarten to grade two for *operations and algebraic thinking*. Concrete examples of the types of problems are much more helpful than a general statement such as "Add and subtract two single-digit numbers." This is how the district attempts to show the depth at which these concepts need to be taught to reflect college- and career-readiness standards.

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Content Area, Standard, and Grade	Mathematics, Grades K-2
Why is this an example of Key Feature 2?	In this example, Baltimore lays out the full progression of problem types where addition and subtraction are used. The table connects the structure of the problem to the corresponding algebraic structure (written as a number equation), illustrating for teachers how building students' conceptual understanding of addition and subtraction and academic language serve as the foundation for algebra.
Structure of the Exemplar	In the example below, the light red reflects proficiency expectations for kindergarten while the light blue and yellow refer to proficiencies for grades one and two respectively. However, this does not preclude students from experiencing all the different variations across the K-2 continuum.
Additional Resources	Situation types for Operations in Word Problems *Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood: Paths Toward Excellence and Equity*, National Research Council, 2009, pp. 32–33.

FIGURE 4. Baltimore City Public Schools Grades K-2 Unit Addressing Operations and Algebraic Thinking

COMMON ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION SITUATIONS*

	Result Unknown	Change Unknown	Start Unknown
Add to (join)	Two bunnies sat on the grass. Three more bunnies hopped there. How many bunnies are on the grass now? $2 + 3 = ?$	Two bunnies were sitting on the grass. Some more bunnies hopped there. Then there were five bunnies. How many bunnies hopped over to the first two? $2 + ? = 5$	Some bunnies were sitting on the grass. Three more bunnies hopped there. Then there were five bunnies. How many bunnies were on the grass before? $? + 3 = 5$
Take from (separate)	Five apples were on the table. I ate two apples. How many apples are on the table now? $5 - 2 = ?$	Five apples were on the table. I ate some apples. Then there were three apples. How many apples did I eat? $5 - ? = 3$	Some apples were on the table. I ate two apples. Then there were three apples. How many apples were on the table before? $? - 2 = 3$
	Total Unknown	**Addend Unknown**	**Both Addends Unknown**
Put Together/ Take Apart (Part-Part-Whole)	Three red apples and two green apples are on the table. How many apples are on the table? $3 + 2 = ?$	Five apples are on the table. There are red and the rest are green. How many apples are green? $3 + ? = 5, 5 - 3 = ?$	Grandma has five flowers. How many can she put in her red vase and how many in her blue vase? $5 = 0 + 5, 5 = 5 + 0$ $5 = 1 + 4, 5 = 4 + 1$ $5 = 2 + 3, 5 = 3 + 2$
	Difference Unknown	**Bigger Unknown**	**Smaller Unknown**
Compare	("How many more?"): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many more apples does Julie have than Lucy? ("How many fewer?"): Lucy has two apples. Julie has five apples. How many fewer apples does Lucy have than Julie? $2 + ? = 5, 5 - 2 = ?$	(Version with "more"): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Lucy has two apples. How many apples does Julie have? (Version with "fewer" suggests wrong operation): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Lucy has two apples. How many apples does Julie have? $2 + 3 = ?, 3 + 2 = ?$	(Version with "fewer"): Lucy has 3 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? (Version with "more" suggests wrong operation): Julie has three more apples than Lucy. Julie has five apples. How many apples does Lucy have? $5 - 3 = ?, ? + 3 = 5$

Red outline indicates the four Kindergarten problem subtypes. Grade 1 and Grade 2 students work with all subtypes and variants. yellow outline problems are the four difficult subtypes or variants that students should work with in Grade 1 but need not master until Grade 2.

1

Resource 1
Source: *Adapted from Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and Progressions for the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics (draft): Operations and Algebraic Thinking
Grade 2 Math Scope and Sequence   SY 2015-2016

Teachers can clearly see the different variations of a problem. This level of detail is important so that students aren't merely assigned $5 + 2 = \square$ or $5 - 2 = \square$. Practice with these two types of problems is not sufficient. In the later grades a persistent problem is that students fixate on finding an answer—either adding or subtracting because they see two numbers—and seldom reading to understand the quantities in relation to the context of the problem. Taking time to investigate the similarities and differences between each problem variation helps students focus upon linking language and mathematics.

These equations are algebra. They show what a valid comprehension of the text looks like with numbers, operations, an equal sign (the verb), and a "?" as the unknown.

This section outlined in red illustrates the four kindergarten problem subtypes. Grade 1 and Grade 2 students work with all subtypes and variants. The orange section problems are the four difficult subtypes or variants that students should work with in Grade 1 but need not develop proficiency in until Grade 2.

The district provided guidance adapted from Box 2-4 of Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood, National Research Council (2009, pp. 32, 33). to support teachers in planning and preparing for lesson delivery.

KEY FEATURE ③

The district's standards-based curriculum builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels and learning environments.

Why is this important?

Learning is a process of making connections between facts and concepts and building or deepening knowledge and skills over time. It is therefore critical that a district curriculum, including the curriculum guidance provided to teachers and other educators, is designed to intentionally and systematically present all students with diverse learning experiences that enable them to access and integrate new information. Seeing how concepts and learning are interconnected builds students' content knowledge, language development, skills, and perseverance.

This intentionality in the sequence, progression, and depth of learning is often referred to as instructional coherence. An effective curriculum builds instructional coherence both within and across grade levels to ensure that students develop the knowledge and skills needed to meet grade-level expectations and to succeed in later grade levels with increasingly sophisticated subjects and concepts.

Moreover, in light of the pandemic and the recurring role of virtual and hybrid models of instruction, instructional coherence has taken on the added dimension of connecting and building on the unique learning opportunities—and challenges—of different learning environments. In addition, curriculum that builds instructional coherence provides teachers with information about typical misconceptions and how to address them, which is important for ensuring our English learners, students with disabilities, and students with unfinished learning are working on grade-level concepts and skills.

What does it look like?

The process of building instructional coherence into a curriculum begins by considering what students should know and be able to do to be college- and career-ready, and then determining how students will acquire and develop knowledge and skills throughout their K-12 experience. Within a grade level, the curriculum should show explicit links between multiple clusters, standards, concepts, or skills to support teachers in making these connections in the classroom. For example, in mathematics the

curriculum may explicitly inform the teacher that when working with multiplication of a two-digit and a one-digit number, they should connect it to finding areas of a rectangle. In English language arts, guidance for preparing students to write an opinion piece should include sufficient diverse and complex texts and questions on a given topic in order to provide an opportunity for students to build background knowledge as they connect their developing writing skills to the ability to cite evidence from multiple texts.

To build coherence across grade levels, some districts include notations on each grade-level curriculum guide to indicate what learning students had the previous year and where that learning will progress in subsequent grade levels.

Example 5: English Language Arts
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
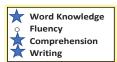
In the curriculum guidance excerpt below from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, notice the two grade-span examples addressing the same language anchor standard that show progression from kindergarten through grade two and grades three through five. This anchor standard is 'less dense' than other standards and therefore shows the key feature without a preponderance of text. That is, instructional coherence is established by consistently focusing on more expansive and sophisticated use of **words** across grade levels.

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts K-2 & 3-5
Why is this an example of Key Feature 3?	This example illustrates standards-aligned curricular coherence across grade levels indicating what learning students had the previous year and where that learning will progress in subsequent year(s).
Structure of the Exemplar	The guidance is organized around the anchor standard with grade-level standards/expectations included across kindergarten through grade 2 as well as grades 3-5.
	Each grade-level standard includes details about the standards expectation for the grade level as well as indicators of success for students with the "I Can Statements" in the learning outcomes.
Additional Resources	_Knowledge-Building Resources for Middle and High School_

FIGURE 5.

Legend:
- ★ Word Knowledge
- ○ Fluency
- ★ Comprehension
- ★ Writing

L6 Anchor Standard: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS

KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE	SECOND GRADE
L.K.6 Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.	**L.1.6** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., because).	**L.2.6** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., When other kids are happy that makes me happy).

STANDARD EXPLANATION
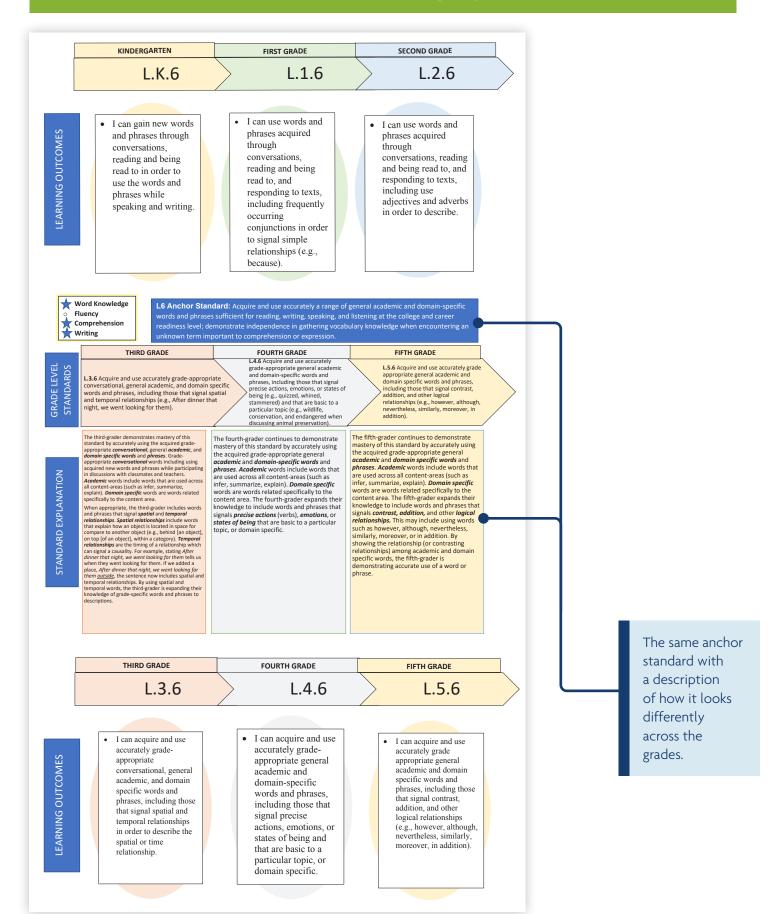
To demonstrate mastery of this standard, the kindergartner using **words** and **phrases** gained through speaking, listening, reading, being read to, and responding to a text. Through the multiple exposures to print, reading a vast amount of text, participating in discussions of the text, and responding to texts read, kindergartners are expanding their **vocabulary** and will therefore expected to use the words and phrases learned.	The first-grader continues to demonstrate mastery of the previously learned skill of using **words** and **phrases** learned through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts. Now, the first-grader expands their use of words and phrases to also include frequently occurring **conjunctions**, or words used to connect clauses and sentences (e.g., **because**) in order to show a **simple relationship**. Using frequently occurring conjunctions allows first-graders an opportunity to expand their knowledge of a domain specific or academic vocabulary word.	In order to demonstrate mastery of this standard, the second-grader continues the previously learned skills of using **words** and **phrases** acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts. Now, the second-grader expands their usage of words and phrases to include **adjectives** (a word or phrase naming an attribute to a noun); and **adverbs** (a word or phrase that modifies and explains typically a verb). The use of adjectives and adverbs requires the second-grader to be more detailed in their explanation and use of domain specific and academic words.

Additional details about the anchor standard are provided in the standard expectation.

KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE	SECOND GRADE
L.K.6	L.1.6	L.2.6

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- I can gain new words and phrases through conversations, reading and being read to in order to use the words and phrases while speaking and writing.

- I can use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including frequently occurring conjunctions in order to signal simple relationships (e.g., because).

- I can use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including use adjectives and adverbs in order to describe.

★ Word Knowledge
○ Fluency
★ Comprehension
★ Writing

L6 Anchor Standard: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS

THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
L.3.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., After dinner that night, we went looking for them).	**L.4.6** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).	**L.5.6** Acquire and use accurately grade appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

STANDARD EXPLANATION

The third-grader demonstrates mastery of this standard by accurately using the acquired grade-appropriate **conversational**, general **academic**, and **domain specific words** and **phrases**. Grade-appropriate **conversational** words including using acquired new words and phrases while participating in discussions with classmates and teachers. **Academic** words include words that are used across all content-areas (such as infer, summarize, explain). **Domain specific** words are words related specifically to the content area. When appropriate, the third-grader includes words and phrases that signal **spatial** and **temporal relationships**. **Spatial relationships** include words that explain how an object is located in space for compare to another object (e.g., behind [an object], on top [of an object], within a category). **Temporal relationships** are the timing of a relationship which can signal a causality. For example, stating *After dinner that night, we went looking for them* tells us when they went looking for them. If we added a place, *After dinner that night, we went looking for them outside*, the sentence now includes spatial and temporal relationships. By using spatial and temporal words, the third-grader is expanding their knowledge of grade-specific words and phrases to descriptions.	The fourth-grader continues to demonstrate mastery of this standard by accurately using the acquired grade-appropriate general **academic** and **domain-specific words** and **phrases**. **Academic** words include words that are used across all content-areas (such as infer, summarize, explain). **Domain specific** words are words related specifically to the content area. The fourth-grader expands their knowledge to include words and phrases that signals **precise actions** (verbs), **emotions**, or **states of being** that are basic to a particular topic, or domain specific.	The fifth-grader continues to demonstrate mastery of this standard by accurately using the acquired grade-appropriate general **academic** and **domain specific words** and **phrases**. **Academic** words include words that are used across all content-areas (such as infer, summarize, explain). **Domain specific** words are words related specifically to the content area. The fifth-grader expands their knowledge to include words and phrases that signals **contrast, addition,** and other **logical relationships.** This may include using words such as however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, or in addition. By showing the relationship (or contrasting relationships) among academic and domain specific words, the fifth-grader is demonstrating accurate use of a word or phrase.

THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
L.3.6	L.4.6	L.5.6

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- I can acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships in order to describe the spatial or time relationship.

- I can acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic, or domain specific.

- I can acquire and use accurately grade appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

The same anchor standard with a description of how it looks differently across the grades.

Example 6: Mathematics
Jefferson County Public Schools

In Jefferson County Public Schools, the curriculum guidance connects the Algebra I mathematics standards to prior grade-level work with functions and their representations, the focus of this unit. This connection shows where prior learning and unfinished learning can be re-engaged within the grade-level work of the unit. This illustrates strategic ways to work on unfinished learning without disengaging from grade-level topics.

JCPS JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Content Area and Grade	Mathematics: Algebra One
Why is this an example of Key Feature 3?	The beginning of each mathematics unit addresses the coherence of the unit topic. In this Algebra 1 unit, teachers are reminded of the learning students did in pre-algebra using multiple representations of a function and how this learning supports them in extending their understanding in Algebra 1.
Structure of the Exemplar	The guidance connects prior learning to the unit focus in Algebra I. The enduring understandings and essential questions anchor the unit along with the Standards of Mathematical Practice. Each unit includes detailed instructional notes and suggestions for the teacher.
Additional Resources	Building a Mathematics Community

FIGURE 6.

The curriculum guidance connects Algebra I coursework to pre-algebra concepts. It will be helpful to teachers to know how the learning in Algebra 1 will be further extended into subsequent mathematics courses.

Algebra I Module 1: Multiple Representations in Mathematics
Unit 1: Representing Relationships Mathematically

Success Skills/Mathematical Practices:	Coherence: Achieve the Core - Coherence Map

• **#2 Reason Abstractly and quantitatively**
    o What is the relationship of the quantities?
    o Could we have used another strategy to solve this task?
    o How did you decide in this task that you needed to use...?
	• In 8th grade, students learned that a function is a rule with one output for each input. Students used multiple representations to depict linear functions and relations. Students created a table of input-output values given a rule and learned to graph linear functions using tables as well as slope and y-intercept.

Algebra I Module 1: Multiple Representations in Mathematics
Unit 1: Representing Relationships Mathematically

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#2 Reason Abstractly and quantitatively
   ○ What is the relationship of the quantities?
   ○ Could we have used another strategy to solve this task?
   ○ How did you decide in this task that you needed to use...?
	● In 8th grade, students learned that a function is a rule with one output for each input. Students used multiple representations to depict linear functions and relations. Students created a table of input-output values given a rule and learned to graph linear functions using tables as well as slope and y-intercept.

The district's curriculum guidance includes the Standards for Mathematical Practice from the college-and career-readiness standards and how they are referenced within the units of study. The Mathematics Framework for the 2025 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) also includes five practices to enhance and provide greater insight into what students know and are able to do: representing, abstracting and generalizing; justifying and proving; mathematical modeling; and collaborative mathematics. In tandem, these practices will enable teachers to assess for understanding in mathematics.

● **#3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others**
   ○ What mathematical evidence would support your solution?
   ○ How did you decide to try that strategy?
   ○ Did you try a method that did not work? Why didn't it work?
   ○ What is the same and what is different about...?
	● In Algebra I, students will generate prior knowledge linear functions to generate other representations from a given representation (table, graph, rule/equations, situations, patterns/diagrams). Instruction should review, explore, and connect linear functions vocabulary from middle school then move to focus topic 2 where students will extend their knowledge.

Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions:
Functions can be represented in various ways, including through algebraic means, graphs, word problems, and tables. Some representations of a function may be more useful than others, depending on the context.	1. How can a function's rate of change define its characteristics and the type of real-world phenomena it can model? 2. How do the different representations compare?

Standards and Suggested Learning Targets (Essential Standards indicated in red)
 Additional mathematics concepts students should learn in order to take advanced courses are indicated by a (+):
 	
 KY.HS.N.4 Use units in context as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; ★ (MP.5, MP.6)
   a. Choose and interpret units consistently in formulas
   b. Choose and interpret the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays.
	Instructional Notes:
	
	 KY.HS.N.4
	 Students should have multiple opportunities to choose and interpret both the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays
	
	 Modeling is best interpreted not as a collection of isolated topics, but rather in relation to other standards. Making mathematical models is a Standard for Mathematical Practice, and specific modeling standards appear throughout the high school standards indicated by a star symbol (★)
	
	 Graphical representations and data displays include but are not limited to: line graphs, circle graphs, histograms, multi-line graphs, scatterplots and multi-bar graphs.

Straightforward statement of *Enduring Understanding* helps teachers maintain a "big picture" perspective of student learning.

Notice both questions help student's make connections:
1) between a function and the real world phenomenon it models and
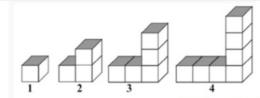2) among the different representations.

Modeling is a coherent system that organizes knowledge about using functions and equations as models of a real-world scenario. The instructional notes here make this point.

Most of the vocabulary terms given here have been seen before and will be seen again. Terms that reappear across units and grade levels are most important as they provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of the terms and concepts with repeated exposure.

Key Vocabulary: algebraically, coefficient, coordinate axes, coordinate plane, constant, dependent variable, domain, equation, equivalent, evaluate, explicit expression, expression, function, graph, graphically, independent variable, input, linear equation, linear function, multiple representations, numerically, ordered pair, output, quantities, range, rate of change, recursive expression, rule, scale, simplify, slope, solution, solve, table, term, units, variable, verbally , $y = mx + b$, y-intercept

Source: http://www.visualpatterns.org/

For more information about implementing pattern talks, visit the following websites:
http://www.mathtalks.net/teachers.html and http://www.visualpatterns.org/

Other Resources: Click the words below each icon to go to the resource.

Math in the Real World

Culturally Responsive

ELL Supports
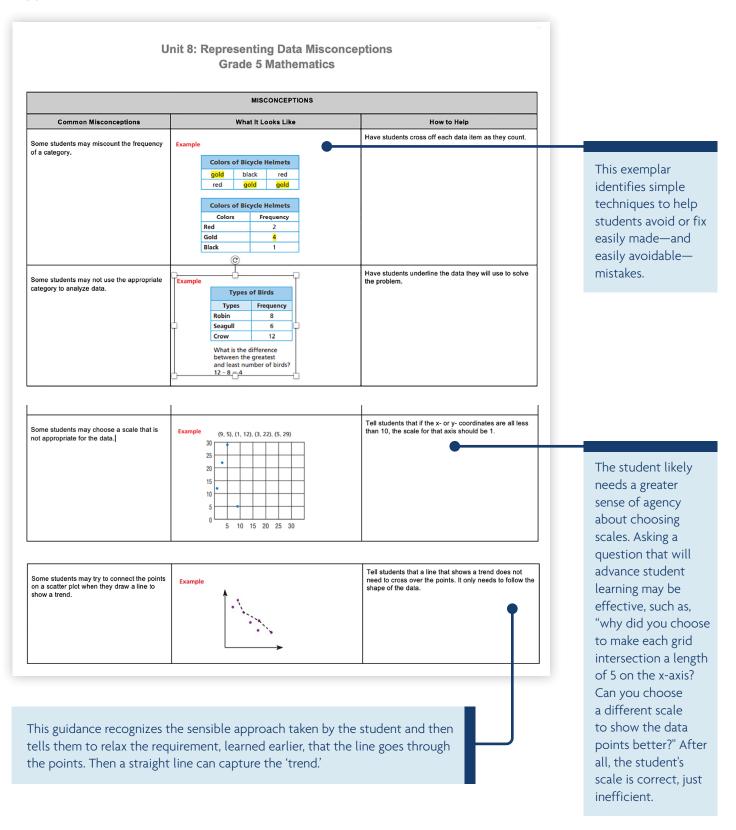
IM Community Hub

Social-Emotional

Example 7: Mathematics
Dallas Independent School District

The Dallas Independent School District included components in their curriculum guidance that mirrors the exemplar from Jefferson County, while including a section to address possible student misconceptions. The table of misconceptions is elegant and useful: handy for the teacher and productive for the student. It identifies the student mistake as the teacher will see it, rather than in abstract terms. Then it shows a concrete example. The "How to Help" column is effective. It does not make the common mistake of assuming the error was caused by "gaps" in prior learning. Instead, it identifies the most likely meta-cognitive and organizational difficulty that causes such mistakes. The recommended actions are simple, clear, and likely to work for most students. This is much better than pulling the student out of grade-level instruction into a 'topic reteaching' system based on a faulty assumption of gaps.

Content Area and Grade	Mathematics: Grade 5
Why is this an example of Key Feature 3?	This chart in the fifth-grade math curriculum framework focuses on potential misconceptions that students might demonstrate when representing data.
Structure of the Exemplar	The first column in the table describes a common misconception; the second column illustrates an example of what that misconception might look like in student work; and the third column provides guidance on how to help students avoid that misconception.

FIGURE 7.

Unit 8: Representing Data Misconceptions
Grade 5 Mathematics

MISCONCEPTIONS		
Common Misconceptions	**What It Looks Like**	**How to Help**
Some students may miscount the frequency of a category.	**Example** **Colors of Bicycle Helmets** gold / black / red red / gold / gold **Colors of Bicycle Helmets** Colors / Frequency Red / 2 Gold / 4 Black / 1	Have students cross off each data item as they count.
Some students may not use the appropriate category to analyze data.	**Example** **Types of Birds** Types / Frequency Robin / 8 Seagull / 6 Crow / 12 What is the difference between the greatest and least number of birds? $12 - 8 = 4$	Have students underline the data they will use to solve the problem.
Some students may choose a scale that is not appropriate for the data.	**Example** (9, 5), (1, 12), (3, 22), (5, 29)	Tell students that if the x- or y- coordinates are all less than 10, the scale for that axis should be 1.
Some students may try to connect the points on a scatter plot when they draw a line to show a trend.	**Example**	Tell students that a line that shows a trend does not need to cross over the points. It only needs to follow the shape of the data.

This exemplar identifies simple techniques to help students avoid or fix easily made—and easily avoidable—mistakes.

The student likely needs a greater sense of agency about choosing scales. Asking a question that will advance student learning may be effective, such as, "why did you choose to make each grid intersection a length of 5 on the x-axis? Can you choose a different scale to show the data points better?" After all, the student's scale is correct, just inefficient.

This guidance recognizes the sensible approach taken by the student and then tells them to relax the requirement, learned earlier, that the line goes through the points. Then a straight line can capture the 'trend.'

KEY FEATURE 4

The district's standards-based curriculum explicitly articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work and writing at different points during the school year and across grade levels. It also provides guidance and metrics on how to gauge student progress in meeting these expectations.

Why is this important?

Just as a district needs to be clear about what must be taught—and at what depth—at each grade level, an effective curriculum provides educators with guidance on how these instructional standards should be apparent in student work and writing samples as they advance through the learning progression. This includes guidance on how to address English Learners (ELs) with different levels of language proficiency and students with disabilities with diverse abilities, accommodations, and modifications. Classroom tasks, activities, projects, and writing assignments not only provide students with an opportunity to apply their learning, they also provide teachers with real-time information on whether their instructional approaches or strategies are helping students make consistent academic progress throughout the year.

It is important for teachers and administrators to know what skills and knowledge students are expected to demonstrate early in the year versus later in the year, and how to look at student work to determine whether students are on track in their development of knowledge, concepts, and grade-level skills. Districts may use annotated exemplars of actual student work illustrating the level of performance required to meet grade-level expectations. This formative data enables educators to adjust their instruction or provide additional support so students have the chance to catch up or address specific challenges to meet grade-level standards before the end of a given school year. It also signals whether students are developing increasing sophistication, depth of knowledge, and skill from one grade level to the next, in line with district standards. This is particularly important for concepts and skills that have proven challenging for district students or are foundational for concepts that develop across grade levels.

What does it look like?

Clearly identifying grade-level standards is necessary, but not sufficient, to prepare teachers to assess student progress throughout the school year. Academic standards are so broad that they cannot be completely taught in a single unit. They are developed across multiple units of instruction over time. Each time the concept is revisited, more complexity is added, and student performance is enhanced.

Districts should consider the time required to address essential content with all students to reflect the progression of concepts and skills within and across grade levels. A quality curriculum pairs the articulation of grade-level standards with more detailed guidance on how students should be performing at various points within the school year, and what indicators teachers should be looking for in student work and writing samples. Districts should use annotated exemplars of actual student work to illustrate the level of performance the district expects at different points in the school year. Other districts use rubrics or pacing guides to describe expectations, although often these are broadly written and interpretations can vary widely without ongoing professional development for teachers to calibrate their use across the district.

Guidance and metrics for assessing student progress and needs should be accompanied with a description of supports and scaffolds for meeting those needs—particularly for diverse learners such as ELs and students with disabilities. This guidance can help teachers determine whether a student is struggling with the content or with the academic language necessary to access the content. While a district curriculum cannot take the place of a comprehensive professional development plan, central office instructional leaders should use their knowledge of common student challenges, unfinished learning, or areas of longstanding underperformance to infuse the curriculum with references to instructional strategies, resources, and steps teachers can take to address student learning challenges as they arise.

To illustrate how a district might clarify standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year, a grade four mathematics unit provides teachers with examples of how student learning progresses throughout the year for standards relating the concepts of place value and multiplication of whole numbers. This document lays out the learning transition from using viable strategies based on place value to employing the standard algorithm with proficiency to show how student learning should develop. A portion of the unit is shown in the following sample.

Example 8: Mathematics

Content Area and Grade	Mathematics: Grade 4
Why is this an example of Key Feature 4?	This example indicates ways students may access and illustrate their understanding as they progress over the course of the year. The example includes a description of student learning experiences from the previous grade level and how it connects to the current grade level expectation. The examples of possible solutions may serve as look-fors when reviewing student work or conducting classroom walk-throughs. It also provides time for students to develop a deep conceptual understanding before requiring procedural fluency with the standard algorithm.
Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar includes a rationale, overarching understandings, and essential questions tied to the unit. This includes instructional notes which connect prior learning to the current unit expectations.
Additional Resources	*Learning Progressions Frameworks Designed for Use with The Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, K-12* *Progression Documents*

FIGURE 8.

Number and Operations in Base-Ten: At Grade 4, students generalize their place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers and use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic. As a result, students extend their work in the base-ten system to adding and subtracting using the standard algorithm to meet the grade 4 fluency expectations.

Rationale:	*Use prior knowledge to make explicit connections to new learning- Instructional Notes*
In grade 4, the focus is on providing experiences so that students are able to recognize and generalize that the value of each place is 10 times the value of the place to the immediate right. Similarly, multiplying by 10 yields a product in which each digit of the multiplicand is shifted one place to the left. During classroom	In grade three, students used their place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. Students developed an understanding that when moving to the right across the places in a number (e.g., 456), the digits represent smaller units. Students learned how to explain instances of a calculation pattern when multiplying one-digit numbers by multiples of ten (for example, the product 4 x 50 can be represented as 4 groups of 5 tens, which is 20 tens, which is 200. The reasoning relies on the associative property of multiplication: 4 x 50 = 4 x (5 x 10) =

Notice the paraphrased standards for this unit rather than listing them separately. This helps teachers understand how the standards connect so that students can meet learning expectations.

instruction, these observations and generalizations should not merely be conveyed to students. Instead, as a result of the lessons and instructional experiences, students are able to grasp these ideas and generalize these concepts with supportive questioning, probing, and explicitness by the teacher.

Overarching understandings:
The structure of the base-ten system involves repeated bundling by 10 (e.g., 10 tens make a unit called a hundred. Repeating this process creates new units by bundling groups of ten to create units called thousand, ten thousand, etc.).

The value of a digit in a number is dependent on its place in the number.

A number can be represented in multiple ways yet maintain its value.

20 x 10 = 200. Additionally, students developed proficiency with adding and subtracting within 1000 and they achieve fluency with strategies and algorithms that are based on place value, properties of operations, and the relationship between addition and subtraction.

In grade 4, students will refine computational strategies and relate them to the standard algorithm as they **develop proficiency with adding and subtracting using the standard algorithm**. For example, in grade three students use strategies to find 756 + 378. At the beginning of grade four, some students will use the standard algorithm without any difficulty, while others will still rely on one or more strategies, including concrete tools (e.g., some students will remove 4 from 378 and give to 756 to rewrite the problem as 760 +374 = 1134 while other students will merely add-digits in the hundreds, tens, and one's place to find the sum—adding from left to right (e.g.,

$$
\begin{array}{r}
756 \\
+378 \\
\hline
1000 \\
120 \\
14 \\
\hline
1134
\end{array}
$$

During class discussions, intentional connections must be made between strategies place value, and the standard algorithm. Throughout the school year you will hear students explaining solutions to tasks/problems using these strategies as they gradually make connections to the standard algorithm. This will allow students to develop proficiency with adding and subtracting using the standard algorithm by the end of grade four.

The curriculum provides guidance about student performance at different times of the school year. This leads to students meeting the proficiency expectation for grade four by the end of the school year.
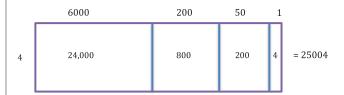
At the beginning of the year, students explain their solution by relating it to place value. Early in the year, students may add from left to right or right to left using this strategy. For example, they state: 7 hundreds + 3 hundreds = 10 hundreds = 1000; 5 tens + 7 tens = 12 tens = 120; 8 ones + 6 ones = 14 ones which is 1 ten , 4 ones = 1134 or explanations are given by adding from the right using the same method. By the end of the year, students will use the standard algorithm to meet grade four fluency expectations.

The base-ten system allows us to systematically represent all numbers using only the ten digits 0-9 and
An understanding of the base-ten number system promotes computational fluency.

Essential questions:

- How can you systematically represent all numbers using only the ten digits, 0-9?

- What is the relationship between the places in a base-ten numeral? What happens when one does repeated bundling of groups of 10?

Also, in grade three, students use strategies such as relationship between multiplication and division (e.g., knowing that 8 x 5 = 40, one knows 40÷8 = 5) or properties of operations. By the end of Grade 3, students will know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers. In grade 4, just as with addition and subtraction, students begin the year multiplying using strategies, concept of area, and properties of operations (e.g., students use an area model to find the product of 6,251 x 4.

	6000	200	50	1	
4	24,000	800	200	4	= 25004

Or use properties of operations (the distributive property) and expanded form 4(6251) = 4(6000+200+50+1). After the initial introduction, students illustrate and explain their calculations based on place-value and properties of operations. Initially, you may see the teacher supporting students as they use expanded form and subdivide rectangles to reflect the relationship between multiplying and finding the area. As students progress during the school year, they will subdivide rectangles as needed to find the area and relate it to finding products. During this time, you will begin seeing students using these strategies to multiply a two-digit number by a two-digit number while other students may transition directly to using the standard algorithm. Before the end of the year, students feel comfortable and persevere when comparing calculations with the standard algorithm, the distributive property, or other properties of operations.

This guidance makes explicit strategies that students may apply to relate finding products to area at the beginning of the school year. This includes acceptable strategies that allow students to explore multiplication and area conceptually while extending their place value understanding. Teachers are better able to assist students in applying and relating their strategies prior to using the standard algorithm for multiplication.

At the beginning of the year, students will relate the concept of area to multiplication. This alerts teachers to allow students to compare relationships between multiplication, area, and expanded form during this time. Throughout the year, students will compare these strategies to the standard algorithm.

Example 9: English Language Arts
District of Columbia Public Schools

The example below from the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) provides the unit learning trajectory for tenth grade students. This document includes teacher guidance that provides the focus of vocabulary and language instruction as well as additional steps teachers can use to boost student attainment of essential vocabulary and language standards needed to meet grade-level learning expectations. Additional instructional considerations and resources for differentiation are also referenced in order to build student learning of grade-level standards over time.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 10
Why is this an example of Key Feature 4?	The curriculum provides clear indicators of what student performances are likely to be at various points within the school year. Thus, it is important for teachers and administrators to know what is expected early in the year versus later in the year to know where to focus instruction and to determine how well students are progressing.
Structure of the Exemplar	This exemplar begins with introducing the common understandings that will support student learning. These common understandings are then expanded to analyze the perspectives of selected authors and poets about the influence of nature vs. nurture in determining individual success. Suggested next steps are provided to promote student use of syntax and vocabulary to boost student performance in writing argumentative essays.

FIGURE 9.

Unit 1 Introductory Lesson: Unit 1 Trajectory Handout

Objective: In order to comprehend Unit 1 expectations and big ideas, students will respond to and discuss Unit 1 essential questions.

Unit Learning Trajectory	Students examine the ways in which authors create and structure narratives in a variety of literary non-fiction texts. First, students will read narrative poetry, including Robert Hayden's "Those Winter Sundays," Nikki Giovanni's "Mothers," and Miguel Pinero's "A Lower East Side Poem." Then, for the Unit 1 Cornerstone, students will craft their own narrative poems that both utilize the genre's stylistic techniques and encompass the theme of choices and whether one's choices are more influenced by nature or nurture. Next, students will participate in a close reading of the informational text, "The Science of Success" by David Dobbs. Students will write a brief response distinguishing and explaining the differences between the "nature" and "nurture" theories. Then, students read the anchor text, The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore, and analyze the text structure the author uses to express his ideas about the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success.
Essential Questions	■ What factors determine and influence individual success? ■ How does a poet advance his/her point of view about the influences in his/her life? ■ How does an author's stylistic choices advance his /her point of view or purpose?
Summative Unit Writing Task	Write an argumentative analysis defending a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success using different author's perspectives presented in multiple nonfiction and informational texts.
Anchor Text	The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore; Culminating Writing Task: How does Wes Moore use text structure and diction to express his ideas about the role of nature or nurture on determining individual success?

Common areas of underperformance and how to support student learning.

While this unit identifies the learning trajectory, it could be even stronger with an indication of how the unit forms the basis of learning throughout the school year.

Close Reading Text	"The Science of Success," by David Dobbs. Writing Task: Scientists continue to debate over the determining factor of individual success: "nature" (genes/predisposition) or "nurture" (support system, home life, socioeconomic status). Distinguish and explain the differences between how the "nature" and "nurture" theories determine individual success. Response should be a minimum of 2–3 paragraphs.
Cornerstone Overview	The Life I Choose: Life's success is about the choices we make. Project: Create and present a personal narrative poem.
Unit Test	Students will write an argumentative analysis defending a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual success using different author's perspectives presented in multiple fiction and nonfiction texts.

Note that multiple tasks over time enable students to develop the next writing skill and depth of knowledge needed to successfully complete the culminating writing task.

UNIT VOCABULARY

Teachers: Please teach vocabulary explicitly and implicitly.

Vocabulary should be taught both explicitly and in context. Teachers can access various vocabulary strategies *via* the novel appendices as well as the close reading appendices.

Additional Guidance: Some vocabulary words provided in the novel and close reading appendices appear as they appeared within the text to promote teaching vocabulary in context. Push the students to define and understand the word/phrase as it is being used within the text as well as how it should be used in other situations. Vocabulary in context can be taught as a 'Do Now' to prepare the students for the day or as an 'Exit Ticket' to 'Check for Understanding.' Increasing student vocabulary is essential however, when taught as a standalone lesson, it should not be more than 20% of the lesson. Some vocabulary words, not listed, are included in text-dependent questions or should be added to meet the needs of your students.

This section provides common areas of underperformance and how to support student learning.

UNIT LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Language standards should be taught both explicitly and in context. Depending on the needs of your students, teachers may need to go over mechanics and grammar in order for students to work towards mastery of language standards.

- Grammar and language skills are embedded into the novel guides and close reading modules. Look out for activities that are designed to strengthen students' use of syntax.

- Hochman-style writing exercises are embedded within close reading modules as well as the novel guide. Teachers are encouraged to utilize these language exercises as warm-ups, exit tickets, or checks for understanding throughout the teaching of these texts.

- As students are writing, teachers are encouraged to conference with students and give them specific feedback on how to correct grammatical and mechanical errors. Teachers are encouraged to allow students to revise their written work in order to become stronger writers.

THE CORNERSTONE EXPERIENCE

Summary

The Life I Choose: Success in life is about the choices we make. Are the choices a product of nature or nurture? Students will compose and perform an original narrative poem that includes narrative poetry elements. Students will build knowledge of narrative poetry by analyzing narrative elements, diction, and theme used in poetry exemplars and will use this knowledge to create their own original narrative poems. Students will also analyze poetry presentations to learn about basic public speaking actions. Students will present their poems to their class and a DCPS poetry event.

Key standards

W.9-10.3	R.L.9-10.4	L.9-10.1.b	SL.9-10.4

Student Outcome / Product

Students will create their own original narrative poems. Students will present their poems to their class at a DCPS poetry event.

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

Additional tasks associated with texts –
suggested instructional routines and practices:

- Shared reading
- Active reading strategies (e.g., turn and talk, stop and jot, targeted task, Think-Pair-Share)
- Text-dependent questions that lead to key understandings
- Explicit and implicit academic vocabulary instruction
- Evidence-based oral and/or written responses
- Text-dependent tasks
- Speaking and Listening tasks such as the ones listed here: https://www.literacyta.com/literacy-standards/common-core/speaking/10/english
- Vocabulary with pictures (i.e., on a Concept Chart divided into three columns, word, picture, definition)
- Anchor Charts
- Wait Time
- Feedback (Teacher/Student)
- Student Centered (Students are actively engaged orally throughout the lesson)
- Use of Multiple Intelligences (Inter/Intrapersonal, Musical, Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Spatial, Naturalist, and Body Kinesthetic)
- Gradual Release (https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/improving-teacher-practice)
- Zone of Proximal Development (www.innovativelearning.com›Teaching and Learning›Educational Psychology)
- Sentence Stems (I am _____because_____)

This document explicitly lays out student learning expectations, from understanding the structure of narratives to demonstrating understanding of nature vs. nurture by writing a narrative poem. Further reading enables students to gain the greater depth of knowledge needed to advance and defend a claim on the role of nature or nurture in determining individual choices using supporting evidence from multiple texts.

Notice that these instructional considerations not only address learning during the course of the unit, but can also be used to support grade-level learning over the course of the school year.

This list assumes that the district has developed a shared understanding of how and when to use these strategies to address the progression of learning throughout the school year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDANCE

Overview: These resources allow for differentiation based on content and student interest as well as student learning profile. They allow for multiple points of entry so that all students can work toward mastery of the unit.

DC Public Library Resources:

Databases: http://dclibrary.org/research/databases?subject%5B%5D=168&keywords

Teacher Access: To utilize these resources, the teachers will need to use either their Educator or Personal Library card. The PIN should be the last four digits of the library card.

Student Access: To utilize these resources, the students will need to use either their DC One Card or Personal Library card. The PIN should be the last four digits of the library card or DC One Card.

Britannica High School Version (Middle School Version can be used for students with lower reading level)

Features: Articles, Image, Videos, Dictionary, Magazines, Webs' Best Sites, Primary Sources/E-Books
Teacher Resources Options: Cite, Translate, Audio, Email, Print, Create Account

Search terms (Britannica Articles): Choice, Determinism, Free Will, Existentialism, Moral Responsibility,

Search terms (Image Quest): Wes Moore, Resilience

Supplemental Class Text	Author	Text Type	Lexile Level	Source
"When Wes Moore Met Wes Moore"	Wes Moore	Informational Article	970L	https://www.baltimoresun.com/entertainment/bs-sm-wes-moore-20120513-story.html
"Money Changes the Way We Think and Behave"	Carolyn Gregoire	Informational		Appendix

These suggestions support teachers in implementing the areas of focus so that predetermined goals for student advancement are attained.

Additional guidance is provided for teacher and student access to differentiated resources and materials.

KEY FEATURE ⑤

The district's curriculum supports culturally relevant instruction and embraces respect and appreciation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

Why is this important?

Students come with a diversity of cultures, languages, abilities and backgrounds. There are values and experiences, in and out of school, that shape their beliefs about themselves and what they are accomplishing. These beliefs can either support or inhibit student academic progress. To this end, instructional practices and materials must affirm the value of students' cultural backgrounds and lived experiences while sending the message that their contributions are welcomed and respected. Simply put, representation matters. The way various cultures are protrayed or overlooked in instruction influences the way students learn to think of themselves and others. For students who are marginalized and unseen, culturally relevant instruction restores their sense of belonging in the academic community of learners. Students are also more likely to interpret academic challenges or even their mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow if they believe they belong in school, they feel seen and valued, and that they are capable of academic success.

A district's standards-based curriculum that incorporates culturally relevant resources and practices is a valuable resource for teachers to use in building student identity, agency, perseverance, and a love of learning. It is through shared learning experiences that students and staff develop an appreciation and respect for the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of their peers.

What does it look like?

Curriculum guidance should be clear about how the district defines culturally relevant instruction, as well as the rationale behind it. Culturally relevant instruction affirms and honors student experience, linguistic repertoires and abilities, and supports students in examining and understanding themselves and the world around them. At the same time, teachers should recognize and build on the assets of their students. Curriculum guidance should provide the tools and strategies necessary for teachers to effectively select appropriate texts and assignments in order to provide culturally relevant instruction in their classrooms. This may include providing sample tasks and activities that invite student discussion, as well as guidance and techniques for facilitating these discussions so that all voices are heard and

honored. These tasks and activities should provide opportunities for students to develop agency and engage with problems affecting their schools and communities. Teachers also need to be prepared to address a range of perspectives and sensitive subjects with respect, and to avoid using negative misconceptions, overgeneralizations, or stereotypes in the name of inclusion or diversity.

In order to build cultural competence alongside academic achievement, texts and tasks should embrace respect for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity while maintaining academic excellence and rigor. They should also provide an opportunity for students to construct logical arguments, share their thinking, and respond to the reasoning of others with respect.

Example 10: English Language Arts
Long Beach Unified School District

The Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) revised their English language arts and secondary history curriculum using a curriculum equity audit process with guidance from an outside provider. One of the district's goals is to incorporate culturally relevant and responsive practices into the curriculum and transfer goals that are outlined in the LBUSD graduate profile. Similar to the DCPS example in Key Feature 1, the curriculum guidance supports teachers in enhancing students background knowledge using a variety of rich text sets.

LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area, and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 9
Why is this an example of Key Feature 5?	One way the district has revised its curriculum to center more on culturally relevant and responsive practices is by including the following curriculum icons, accompanied with written instructional guidance, throughout the teacher planning guides.
	• Student Goal Statements 🎯
	Icon placed in curriculum guidance documents to identify essential questions, concepts, and understandings that should be shared with students as a way to anchor their meaning making.
	• Family and Community Communication Notes 🌍
	Icon is used to provide educators with a summary of the unit learning that supports communication with family and community members.
	• Equity Note ❤️
	Icon is used to identify reflection questions and content that supports the district's continued learning in the pursuit of cultivating a classroom that values the social, emotional, linguistic, and cultural assets of all learners.

A clear and relevant rationale for the learning is provided, emphasizing the need for students to become critical consumers of texts and effective communicators.

In addition, the "Small Group Learning" excerpt in this exemplar provides "Coach's Notes" that highlight the inclusion of diverse text sets and transformative social emotional learning. A focus on archetypal themes also supports cross-cultural understanding. Lastly, differentiated resources are provided to support the diverse needs of learners, without sacrificing academic rigor.

Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar begins by describing the desired results for this unit of instruction, key conceptual lenses, and important family/community and equity notes for instructional guidance. Next, an excerpt is provided from one of the planning guides in the unit outlining the standards-based concepts and planning, general resources, and differentiation resources.
Additional Resources	LBUSD Graduate Profile • Student Achievement Partners Wonders Adaption Project Map https://achievethecore.org/page/3131/wonders-materials-adaptation-project • Student Achievement Partners Examining the Research for Literacy Accelerators https://achievethecore.org/content/upload/1_Executive%20Summary.pdf • LBUSD Understandings https://www.lbschools.net/departments/curriculum/curriculum-services/excellence-and-equity/understanding-curriculum

FIGURE 10.

Stage 1 Desired Results

Title: Star-Crossed Romances
Unit: 4
Date: Quarter 4 (April – June)
Grade: 9

◎ **Student-Facing Unit Goal:**
Historical texts can help us learn about the time in which they were written, but also offer insight into ourselves and those around us. The ideas and themes of these works are still relevant today. In reading Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, students will be considering, "Do we determine our own destinies?" How do those around us influence our beliefs and choices? How significant are outside influences on our decision making?

Transfer

In preparing to be college, career, and community-ready scholars, students will use their learned skills and knowledge to become…

- Adaptable and productive citizens who analyze multiple factors that impact identity, community belonging, lived experiences to better recognize the value of diversity.
- Effective collaborators and communicators who center joy by elevating beauty, humanity, and truthful narratives of diverse people of the world.
- Critical and innovative problem solvers, who engage with significant concepts that shape our understanding of history, power, justice, liberation, and equity.

Note how the unit goal situates students' identities and lived experiences at the center of the learning.

🌐 **Family and Community Communication Notes:**
As you prepare this unit and wish to communicate out to families and communities (e.g. parent/ guardian letter), students will be discussing fate vs. destiny, family, loyalty, conflict, and love. Additionally, students will be studying argument and the importance of making a clear claim supported with specific and relevant evidence. This can be an opportunity for families and communities to discuss how language is used to present different perspectives and support an argument.

❤️ **Equity Note:**
Responding as a critical educator means reflecting and acquiring new knowledge or skills that centers your classroom community, their identities and needs in service to their growth and progress as learners. Some students may have

- Ethical decision makers, who consume, critique, and produce texts to better advocate for themselves, their ideas, their families, and their communities.

Conceptual Lenses: Love, Loyalty, Family, Destiny, Identity

Meaning	
UNDERSTANDINGS (Guiding Questions) Students will understand that… 1. Historical texts provide insights into enduring human themes. 2. Authors often build from the works of others, using allusions to create references recognized by people across time. 3. Authors purposefully use a complex range of literary devices and strategies to engage their readers and convey their ideas. 4. Literary critiques and other forms of arguments require an author to share their own authentic opinions while using evidence, reasoning, and addressing opposing viewpoints.	ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • Do we determine our own destinies? ○ Which has a greater impact: destiny or personal choices? • Why do star-crossed romances have such a profound effect on audiences? • Should the opinion of others affect a person's own choices or destiny? • How can authors use language to engage the reader and achieve different purposes?

LBUSD Secondary ELA, Grade 9 Unit 4: Star-Crossed Romances   2021-2022   Page 2

experienced. Additionally, some students may bring bias (implicit and/or explicit), so it will be important to set group norms for whole class and small group discussions. Students are going to have different contexts and prior knowledge about Shakespeare.

- How might conversations about Romeo and Juliet and the themes that are connected to it (i.e., fate and destiny, family obligations, etc.) make some of my students uncomfortable? What can I do to create a safe classroom environment that allows all student voices to be heard?

Acquisition	

Students will know…(Thematic concepts)
☐ Love
☐ Contrast of love and hate
☐ Destiny vs. individual choice
☐ Loyalty
☐ Defying authority
☐ Identity
☐ Universal themes
 	
Students will know…(Discipline-specific concepts)
☐ Elements of an argument
  ☐ precise claim
  ☐ sufficient and relevant evidence
  ☐ logical reasoning
	Students will be skilled at…
	☐ Determine the author's claim or central idea
	☐ Analyzing key details that add to the development of the central idea.
	☐ Crafting an argument about a text that includes a specific literary insight
	  ☐ establish a context for the topic
	  ☐ clear, concise, defined claim/thesis
	  ☐ sufficient and relevant evidence
	  ☐ address counterarguments
	  ☐ conclusion that readdresses the position
	  ☐ clear and logical transitions

Families and communities are viewed as partners in learning. An asset-based approach is evident by providing families/communities with the opportunity to discuss how they use language to present different perspectives and support an argument. Teachers can then highlight and honor these valuable ways of communicating when discussing and studying the genre of argument and the importance of making a claim supported by evidence.

Equity Note guidance is provided to support teachers in practicing self-awareness to minimize the effects of their own biases (implicit and/or explicit) when facilitating conversations about the text and related themes. Additionally, the reflective questions prepare educators to address sensitive topics, anticipate, and respond to potential student biases during whole class and small group discussions.

Curriculum guidance provides guiding questions for teaching archetypal themes.

Small Group Learning: During this section students will encounter more rigorous texts, and the teacher is expected to provide robust guidance and scaffolding to help students access the text and discuss and explore these larger ideas to come to a deeper understanding.

Planning Guide #6: 1 block (or 2 50-minute periods)

Standards - Based Concepts and Planning (What am I teaching?)	Resources	Differentiation Resources
Reading and Writing Learning Targets: (What?) ● Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, and reflection of how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work W 9.9 and W 9.9a ● Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. RL 9.6 ● Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. RI 9.3 ★*COACH'S NOTE: We have completed a task analysis of the standards for your use in designing possible **mini-lessons** that students might need in order to show mastery of the standard(s) through the closing assessment.* ● Explain how the texts connects to other works (i.e. Romeo and Juliet) ● Establish a claim related to the texts, focusing on the enduring themes	**Core Texts:** ★*COACH'S NOTE: The following texts are from other cultures and contain the same themes as Romeo and Juliet, such as forbidden love, strife from the surrounding society, and overcoming obstacles. Allow students to choose whichever text would be of most interest to them and work in text-alike groups. The skills, mini-lesson options, and closing tasks will remain the same.* ● Richard and Mildred Loving ● The tragic love story of Alma Reed and Felipe Carrillo ● Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl ● Pyramus and Thisbe ● Afghanistan's Real-Life Romeo and Juliet ● Twenty Years On: The Unfinished Lives of Bosnia's Romeo and Juliet ● Supreme Court Gay Marriage Ruling **Connection to the Unit Essential Question:** The universal themes from Romeo and Juliet can be found in many cultures, both in literature and real-life. Allow students to explore the essential question through a variety of text. This will also prepare students for the Teacher-guided writing.	**EL Resources:** ● Assign Audio Summary in the Realize digital platform (🎥) to ELs before reading to provide background and context. ● Using the audio version available in the Pearson/ Savvas Realize digital platform, students can listen to the audio recording of the text while they read along. (How-to 🎥 for students) ● EL Support Lesson: Archetype Plot **Acceleration Resources:** ● Identify connections to LL Pathway industries. Allow students to research these archetypal themes within their own industry. **Additional Key Learning Opportunities:** ● Mini-lesson on transitions

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> Notice how the guidance includes specific resources for English Learners to access grade-level content.

> The district identified additional texts from diverse cultures with the same themes as *Romeo and Juliet* as options for student choice. These texts present additional perspectives and are embedded directly into the curriculum to build and affirm identity and representation, building respect and appreciation for another culture. Maintaining the academic excellence and rigor, the planning guide specifically indicates that the "skills, mini-lesson options, and closing tasks will remain the same" for each reading selection.
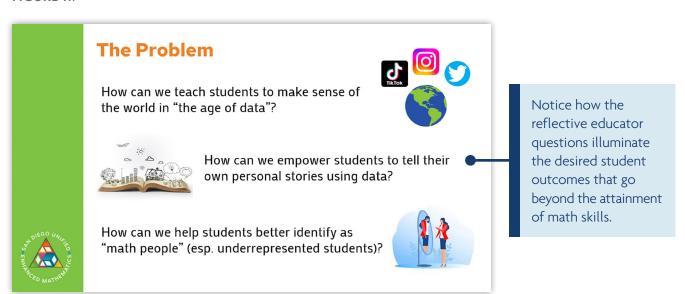
Example 11: Mathematics
San Diego Unified School District

Additionally, San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD), in collaboration with the Young Data Scientists League, designed curriculum guidance that was student-centered, authentic, and standards-based for their middle school mathematics summer school program. This exemplar illustrates a way to operationalize some of the key elements of culturally responsive instruction such as making connections between students' prior knowledge and lived experiences to the new learning, promoting student and community agency and input, and developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities. The curriculum aims to help students, especially underrepresented students, to better identify themselves as "math people" or young data scientists.

San Diego Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area and Grade	Middle School Math Summer School Curriculum
Why is this an example of Key Feature 5?	This district exemplar supports culturally responsive instruction by providing texts that showcase diverse experiences and perspectives, empowering students to share their own personal stories using data, leveraging the cultural learning tools of students, and to use math and data science to examine and fight bias.
Structure of the Exemplar	To prime students for learning data science, a compelling question is posed in each unit. In this exemplar unit the question posed is: "How well do you think our media represents people of all races and skin tones? Why?" Throughout these modules, students are provided with numerous opportunities to collaborate, collect and analyze data, listen to diverse perspectives, and problem-solve. After the initial kickoff activities, students work in teams to use data to tell stories from their own lives and/or to explore issues or topics that are meaningful to them.
Additional Resources	[Young Data Scientist](#)

FIGURE 11.

The Problem

How can we teach students to make sense of the world in "the age of data"?

How can we empower students to tell their own personal stories using data?

How can we help students better identify as "math people" (esp. underrepresented students)?

Notice how the reflective educator questions illuminate the desired student outcomes that go beyond the attainment of math skills.

The Solution

Module 1: Data, Identity, and Representation

Module 2: Data in My Own Life / "Dear Data"

Module 3: Data in the World

Module 4: Data, AI, Ethics, & Fighting Bias

This mathematics module serves to deepen students' understanding and skills with data science while simultaneously supporting an analysis of how representation in the media impacts both individual and collective identities.

Module 1 Day 1 Lesson Plan: Data Science and Representation in the Media
Time: 2 days (Day 1 of 2: June 23)

Lesson Objective: Prime students for learning data science with a 30 minute, hands-on activity that guides students through a broadly relevant real-world application of data (in race and representation).

Essential Question: How well do you think our media represents people of all races and skin tones? Why?

To-Do BEFORE the Lesson:
- Make a Copy of this Spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will be used to reverse-engineer (or create) a form to give students. Use Pg 1 of the Facilitation Guide or these slides to create the Google Form to collect data.
- Read the Online Lesson Plan and Facilitation Guide for more information

Pacing-at-a-Glance:
Lesson Activities (Part 1, 2, and 3): (30 Minutes)
See Online Lesson Plan and/or Facilitation Guide for specific instructional moves and conversation starters.

"Part 1": (Launch: 10 minutes)	**"Part 2":** (Launch: 5 minutes)	**"Part 3":** (Explore: 15 minutes)
- Week 1 Intro Video - Intro and Norms video - London's Video - Reflection (see Online Plan)	- Video 1 (Prompt), Discussion - Video 2 (Intro), Discussion	- Video: Demonstrate How to Collect Data - Students Collect Data and submit in the form created.

*Pause Module 1 to begin Exhibition work

Exhibition Work: (30 minutes)
- Reflect on work done in Parts 1, 2, and 3, and *why the work is important*.
- Begin Exhibition Work (Student Checklist) Most will have their final presentations in Google Slides or Google Drawings, so a laptop or projection may be required. Share pg 1 of the Story Project Guide for students to use.
  - Students choose their working groups - teams of 4-6 students. See Online Lesson Plan for prompts teams should complete, found at the bottom. **Possible Roles for Student Teams:**
    - **Technology Support** (supports and maintains laptops, audio, etc.)
    - **Behind the Scenes Support** (in charge of designing set-up, take-down, traffic management, etc.)
    - **Host** (greets guests, passes out handouts, gives brief overview of project, introduces guests to team)
    - **Documentarian** (ensures all students, their work, and experiences are documented/photographed for reflection, sharing, etc.)

Resources and Links:
Online Lesson Plan, Facilitation Guide
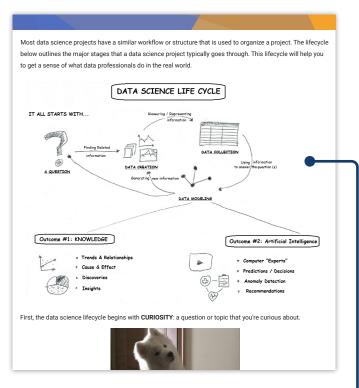Student Digital Interactive Notebook
Teacher Slides
Student Checklist and Exhibition Timeline
Part 3: Image Color Picker, and support slides; Links to Magazine Archives:

Note how the essential question invites all students into a data investigation that is student-centered and culturally relevant. Intentional design in these modules connects students' lived experiences and identities to the math content.

The district provided guidance for teachers in planning and preparing for lesson delivery.

Getting Started with Your Story Project!

Collaborate with Others
Technical Knowledge
Showcase Your Impact

1. **As a team, pick a topic you find interesting.**
   a. Consult with each member of the team
   b. Make sure all voices are heard

2. **Collect and/or create data about your topic. What story do you want to tell people about your topic?**
   a. An example of an impactful story can be found here.
   b. Use data to support that story. Sometimes, looking at data raises more questions.
   c. The direction your project takes may change - or the story you decide to tell about it - that is ok!

3. **Use all your data science skills from Bootcamp to discover insights & support your story.**
   a. Asking Questions, Data Creation, Data Collection, Data Modeling, Visualization, Making Conclusions, Storytelling, and Building AI

   See Weeks 1-5 of Bootcamp and engage with your mentors!

4. **Create a presentation to present at the Data Games**
   a. Work with all team members to ensure their work is highlighted!

Most data science projects have a similar workflow or structure that is used to organize a project. The lifecycle below outlines the major stages that a data science project typically goes through. This lifecycle will help you to get a sense of what data professionals do in the real world.

DATA SCIENCE LIFE CYCLE

First, the data science lifecycle begins with **CURIOSITY**: a question or topic that you're curious about.

All content in this lesson preview comes from the Young Data Scientist Quest, a program designed by the Young Data Scientists League (YDSL). Primary authors for Module 1 are Princewill Okoroafor and Yunhan Huang. All student and teacher resources seen in the San Diego Unified School District's Summer Learning Experience have been curated by Stephanie Melville and members of the Math Leadership Team, a part of SDUSD's Instructional Innovation and Leadership and Learning teams, with permission from YDSL. All content is licensed under: CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

This team-based project capitalizes on the cultural tools of learning for many of our diverse students where collaboration and oral traditions are valued and used to build knowledge. In addition, students have the opportunity to problem-solve with diverse partners, hear new perspectives, share their personal experiences, and acquire skills that help them engage as global citizens. Also, notice how this Story Project connects to the educators' earlier reflective question, "How can we empower students to tell their own personal stories using data?"

Example 12: History/Social Science
Detroit Public Schools Community School District

Similarly, Detroit Public Schools Community District's History and Social Science curriculum guidance, elevating students' identities (racial, cultural, gender), choices, and support for students finding their voice, is situated as a pre-requisite in the context of the course content. For example, the curriculum identifies the following statement as a focus of the unit: *students will be able to explore how each person's story contributes to the larger narrative of United States history.* The discipline of history helps students find their place in time, think about who they are, and about their future. Students study the past to understand the present and prepare to take on the challenges to come. This exemplar is from the first unit of the year-long U.S. History course.

DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMUNITY DISTRICT

Content Area and Grade	US History, Grade 9
Why is this an example of Key Feature 5?	The compelling question for the unit *(How does each person's story contribute to the larger narrative of United States history?)* positions the unit lessons within an asset-based approach to students' lived experiences and how they and others see themselves. The links to lesson resources and activities are accessed at Facing History and Ourselves. This (open source) online resource includes tasks and assignments that invite students to participate in individual journaling and reflection, pair share, small group, and whole class discussions addressing identity, choices, perceptions, and experiences.
Structure of the Exemplar	Each unit begins with a Unit Overview that includes a compelling question, mastery statement and materials overview. The Unit-At-A-Glance follows an outline of the unit lessons that include a supporting question, the lesson task(s), and standards for each unit. The first unit is about identity and allows students to explore their own voice and how they fit into the identity of the United States. Students will revisit this identity work at the end of the year to examine how all of our collective voices create our nation's identity.
Additional Resources	Facing History and Ourselves

FIGURE 12.

Each lesson reminds teachers of the compelling question for the unit and provides a supporting question for the lesson that links back to the compelling question for that unit.

Unit 1: Individual Voices and National Identity   2021-2022

Lesson #5 – Identity and Choices	Objective: Students will explore the ways in which opinions or perceptions of opinions influence our identity or how we present ourselves.
Compelling Question: How does each person's story contribute to the larger narrative of United States history?	Supporting Question: What choices do we make about our own identities?

Prep:
• Access the Facing History and Ourselves lesson page to familiarize yourself with writing and discussion prompts.

This unit helps students to identity their cultural strengths and for the teacher to nurture those strengths.

Lesson Agenda

✏️	In this opening activity, students **Reflect on the Relationship between Our Choices and Others' Perceptions**. Students will think about their routine and how other people's choices impact or influence their decisions throughout their routine. This activity helps to illustrate how the opinions of others (or, at least, our perception of their opinions) can influence the way we choose to represent ourselves. Visit the Identity and Choices lesson site and follow the directions under Step 1 for this activity.	10 min
💬	Now, engage students in the activity **Analyze the Connection between Appearances and Assumptions**. Students will explore images from Bayeté Ross Smith's Our Kind of People. Visit the Identity and Choices lesson site and follow the directions under Step 2 for this activity.	15 min
💬	This **Compare and Contrast Online and "Real Life" Identity** activity includes excerpts from interviews with teens, conducted by the Pew Research Center, about how young people share their identities online. Students will use the excerpts found in the reading Creating Ourselves Online and in "Real Life" to think about the ways they portray their identities online and how those online identities relate to who they are in "real life." Visit the Identity and Choices lesson site and follow the directions under Step 3 for this activity.	15 min
💬	In this **Discuss What It Means to "Find Your Voice"** activity, students read two texts. In the first, Computer Keyboard, Gerard reflects on how he developed a love of taking apart gadgets and equipment to learn how they work. In the second story, Chameleon, David recalls a time when he bought shoes to fit in with his high school friends, and he describes his surprise when his new shoes did not command the reception he expected. The texts together help students consider the ways that individuals can find their voices as well as the courage to listen to those voices, despite what others say to or about them. Visit the Identity and Choices lesson site and follow the directions under Step 4 for this activity.	10 min

Lesson Resources:	Lesson Tasks
Facing History: Identity and Choices	• Journal Prompt

Identity and voice bolsters the learning of the district's curriculum guidance.

9th Grade Unit 2 Overview – Industrialization, Urbanization and Becoming a World Power

13 Instructional Days	13 Lessons	September 20 – October 6
Unit Compelling Question: What were the overall positive and negative effects of industrialization on America?	**Unit Overview:** The unit begins in US History at the time of Industrialization. It is important to begin your class in this time because this will ensure pacing will stay on track to get to the 21st century by the end of the course. This unit takes students on a journey of discovering the factors for the United States' rise as an industrial power and how industrialization affected many different parts of American culture: from workers' rights to immigration to urbanization. Students examine the Jim Crow era and make connections to today. Students begin to hone their primary source summarization skills with a DBQ at the end of the unit. Using primary sources as evidence in a well-reasoned argument will be a key skill throughout this course and this unit's focus is on summarizing primary sources. The unit concludes with a unit assessment. Teachers can use the mastery statements on the unit assessment lessons to build their unit assessment; make sure to align your questions to those mastery statements.	
Mastery Statement: Students will be able to evaluate the positive and negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution.		
Unit Assessment: Multiple Choice and Short Answer Test		

As students deepen their understanding about the U.S. during industrialization, urbanization, and becoming a world power, they also relate it to themselves and consider the impact on their respective communities.

Materials Overview	
America Through The Lens • Student Edition • Inquiry Journal • Teacher Edition • Digital platform	**Chapter 6**: Industrial America Students explore the economic, political, and social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. **Compelling Question**: What were the overall positive and negative effects of industrialization on America?

Vision of Excellent Instruction	Flex Time
1) Students explore the historical experience of immigrants in the United States in support of section 1. 2) There are 8 activities that use primary sources or other complex text in alignment with section 2a and 2b. 3) Students have 18 opportunities for discussion with their classmates in alignment with section 3. 4) Students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways: from class discussions to supporting question written responses to a unit assessment.	There is no flex time in this unit.

Pursuit	Culturally and Historically Responsive Teaching Point of Use Professional Development	Click or Scan QR Code
Identity	Students will learn about themselves or others by exploring the early 20th century immigrant experience in the United States.	Explore more about the incorporation of all 5 pursuits into unit examples by watching the following video, from time stamp 40:00 – 57:00:
Skills	Students will build Social Studies skills by reading and analyzing primary and secondary sources and engaging in structured discussions.	
Criticality	Students will examine disruption of power through African American journalists who exposed racial violence in the early 20th century.	
Joy	Joy seeks to answer the question: How will instruction elevate the beauty in humanity? Students answer that question in this unit by examining the innovation that workers created by forming unions as well as Black founded educational institutions.	
Intellect	Students will build their Social Studies knowledge in this unit by exploring how industrialization affected all the different facets of American life.	

The curriculum guidance includes embedded links and QR codes with time stamps to illustrate how teachers can incorporate culturally relevant practices into daily classroom instruction.

KEY FEATURE 6

The district's standards-based curriculum contains scaffolds and other supports to address unfinished learning while leveraging the assets of diverse learners to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.

Why is this important?

Students come to the classroom with many skills, abilities, and preferences for learning. All classrooms need to be prepared to welcome diverse learners and their learning needs, which requires curriculum to provide specific strategies, just-in-time instructional resources, and guidance to meet specific educational needs related to such diversity. Many students also have moved through grade levels accumulating misconceptions and gaps in conceptual understanding or skills that profoundly impact their continued learning of increasingly complex ideas and texts. More advanced students will need opportunities to apply and extend their learning with greater sophistication and depth of knowledge.

A responsive district analyzes student performance data and uses curriculum guidance documents to provide teachers with examples of differentiated supports so that students can access quality curriculum and demonstrate appropriate attainment of grade-level standards, as well as experiences for extending their learning. This includes attending to language development, responding to diverse learning needs, and how to address them during Tier 1 instruction. When this does not occur, unfinished learning grows or is mistaken as a performance issue rather than an opportunity to learn issue. Based on assessment data and samples of student work collected during walk throughs in schools, district staff can determine areas of unfinished learning and instructional misconceptions that are common throughout the school system. They can also identify areas that require additional instructional focus in language, writing, and reasoning skills, as well as areas for growth and acceleration.

It is important that a district's curriculum takes an asset-based approach to meet the needs of diverse learners and considers: What skills, abilities, interests, and linguistic repetoires do the students bring? What prior knowledge are students bringing that needs solidifying to build upon? What content connections can be made to previously-taught concepts?

What does it look like?

When addressing unfinished learning, widely different outcomes occur when individual teachers are left to determine the scaffolds and other supports needed to address the needs of diverse learners. If the learning needs are not systematically addressed during Tier 1 instruction, students are unlikely to catch up and access grade-level content. Some teachers may begin reteaching skills from earlier grade levels, thus delaying entry into grade-level work, even though the gap could have been addressed during grade-level instruction or with appropriate support. It is also not necessary to pull students out of instruction in grade-level work for interventions when Tier I classroom instruction is geared to handling common misconceptions during daily instruction. At the same time, the curriculum should provide teachers with guidance for supporting and further enhancing learning opportunities for all students, including gifted and talented students. This will save teachers time from researching additional activities online and will maximize the likelihood of students performing at grade level and beyond.

A quality curriculum includes guidance on instructional design that allows students opportunities to access content in multiple ways and demonstrate their understanding of grade-level content in different ways. Depending on the strengths and needs a diverse learner may have, the district curriculum guidance may be as simple as a note to the teacher within the lesson design to help them discern when a strategy is best used to address the needs of diverse learners. For more complex issues, examples of activities or even links to videos of classroom techniques can support classroom teachers. Again, a district may not address every possible need in the first edition of its curriculum guidance, however by partnering with the English Learners, Special/Exceptional Education, Gifted and Talented, and Equity departments throughout the design, implementation, and assessment of the district curriculum, the scaffolds and supports that students need can be meaningfully integrated and implemented. It is important to gather input and feedback from instructional staff and review student work samples to make adjustments and improvements in the district's curriculum guidance.

Example 13: Mathematics
Denver Public Schools

In Denver Public Schools (DPS), the district has focused on academic language development to address the needs of diverse learners as a central strategy in their curriculum guidance. The district has defined academic language as "...the language needed to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It consists of language at the word, sentence, and discourse level." In the math exemplar below, instructional guidance is provided in their Scope and Sequence document on the language students need to know and use to explain mathematical concepts and express mathematical thinking. Linked instructional documents also reflect the district's focus on integrating content, language development, and scaffolds to support diverse learners.

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Content Area and Grade	Math, Grade 7 Unit 2: Introducing Proportional Relationships • 7.RP Ratios and Proportional Relationships • 7.RP.A Analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. (Major) • 7.RP.A.1 Compute unit rates associated with ratios of fractions, including ratios of lengths, areas and other quantities measured in like or different units. *For example, if a person walks 1/2 mile in each 1/4 hour, compute the unit rate as the complex fraction 1/2/1/4 miles per hour, equivalently 2 miles per hour.* • 7.RP.A.2 Recognize and represent proportional relationships between quantities. • 7.RP.A.2a Decide whether two quantities are in a proportional relationship, e.g., by testing for equivalent ratios in a table or graphing on a coordinate plane and observing whether the graph is a straight line through the origin. • 7.RP.A.2b Identify the constant of proportionality (unit rate) in tables, graphs, equations, diagrams, and verbal descriptions of proportional relationships. • 7.RP.A.2c Represent proportional relationships by equations. *For example, if total cost t is proportional to the number n of items purchased at a constant price p, the relationship between the total cost and the number of items can be expressed as t = pn.* • 7.RP.A.2d Explain what a point (x, y) on the graph of a proportional relationship means in terms of the situation, with special attention to the points (0, 0) and (1, r) where r is the unit rate.
Why is this an example of Key Feature 6?	The district's Scope and Sequence document places emphasis on the language students need to know and use to explain mathematical concepts and express mathematical thinking. Specific language goals and language exemplars are provided that are aligned to the standards addressed in the unit, along with key language functions in mathematics. In addition, academic vocabulary and linguistic supports at the sentence and discourse levels are included.

	Linked instructional guidance documents provide teachers with specific supports and examples for how to ensure diverse learners can access rigorous mathematical tasks and develop their use of mathematical language. Assets based pedagogies are noted (such as connecting multiple representations to their linguistic repertoires, facilitating collaborative groupings, making connections to students' personal experiences and prior knowledge) to counter deficit approaches and instead value, leverage, and build upon the assets of diverse learners.
Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar begins by identifying the mathematics standards for the unit along with specific language goals and language exemplars connected to the content standards. A section on the academic language students are expected to know and use in this unit follows, along with linguistic scaffolds at the word, sentence, and discourse level. Lastly, resources for integrating and supporting content and language development are included.
Additional Resources	Integrated Content and Language Development (ICLD) Academic Rigor in Mathematics: Supports for Multilingual Learners Language Functions & Forms (Spanish) Academic Discourse Sentence Starters

FIGURE 13.

Grade 7 Mathematics Open Up Scope and Sequence

Colorado Essential Skills *from the Colorado Academic Standards*

COLORADO
ACADEMIC STANDARDS
All Students
All Standards

❑ **Personal Skills**

❑ **Entrepreneurial Skills**

❑ **Civic/Interpersonal Skills**

❑ **Professional Skills**

Standards for Mathematical Practice

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Unit of Study*	Length of Unit**	Time Frame
Unit 1: Scale Drawings	14 days	August 23 - September 10, 2021
Unit 2: Introducing Proportional Relationships	19 days	September 13 - October 8, 2021
Unit 4: Proportional Relationships and Percentages	18 days	October 11 - November 5, 2021
Unit 5: Rational Number Arithmetic	25 days	November 8 - December 19, 2021
Unit 6: Expressions, Equations and Inequalities	28 days	January 4 - February 11, 2022
Unit 7: Angles, Triangles and Prisms	18 days	February 14 - March 11, 2022
Unit 3: Measuring Circles	10 days	March 14 - March 25, 2022
Unit 8: Probability and Sampling	29 days	April 5 - May 13, 2022
Unit 9: Putting It All Together	13 days	May 16 - June 2, 2022

* In order to align to interim assessments, please note that not all units are taught in order.

Denver Public Schools   2021-2022   1

This creates clarity for the teacher about what constitutes quality standards of practice in mathematics that explicitly engage students, which is key to creating opportunities for diverse learners.

The district's curriculum guidance includes the Standards for Mathematical Practice from the college- and career-readiness standards and how they are included within the units of study. The Mathematics Framework for the 2025 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) also includes five practices to enhance and provide greater insight into what students know and are able to do: representing; abstracting and generalizing; justifying and proving; mathematical modeling; and collaborative mathematics. In tandem, these practices will enable teachers to assess for understanding in mathematics.
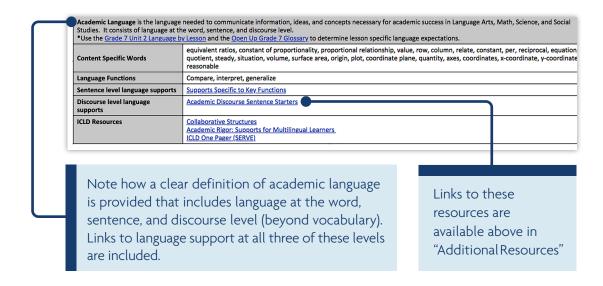
This bridges the content standards from prior grade levels to assist the teacher in addressing unfinished learning.

End-of-Year Fluency Recommendations
- Fluency solving word problems leading to simple one-variable equations of the form $px + q = r$ and $p(x + q) = r$. 7.EE.B.4a

Unit of Study	Unit 1: Scale Drawings	Length of Unit	14 days (August 24 - September 10, 2021)
Unit Learning Trajectory	Work with scale drawings draws on earlier work with geometry and geometric measurement. In this unit, students study scaled copies of pictures and plane figures, developing an increasingly precise understanding of a scale drawing, then apply what they have learned to maps and floor plans. This lays the groundwork for work with proportional relationships later this year, as well as grade 8 work on dilations and similarity. In this unit, scaled copies have similar orientation (they are not reflections or rotations of each other). In grade 8, students will extend their understanding when they study transformations of figures. Several lessons in this unit suggest that each student have access to a geometry toolkit. Each toolkit should contain tracing paper, graph paper, colored pencils, scissors, centimeter ruler, protractor and an index card to use as a straightedge or to mark right angles. These physical tools are important even for students in a digital classroom.		
Common Core State Standards	**7.G Geometry** **7.G.A Draw construct and describe geometrical figures and describe the relationships between them. (Additional)** 7.G.A.1 Solve problems involving scale drawings of geometric figures, including computing actual lengths and areas from a scale drawing and reproducing a scale drawing at a different scale.		
[20/21 Grade 6 Priority Instruction Considerations](#)	**Aligned Prior Grade Level Standard:** 6.G.A Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume. (Supporting) **Consideration:** Emphasized understanding of the reasoning leading to the triangle area formula; instead of teaching additional area formulas as separate topics, emphasized problems that focus on finding areas in real-world problems by decomposing figures into triangles and rectangles.		

Generalizations (Conceptual Understanding)

My students Understand that...	Guiding Questions to Build Conceptual Understanding
- Scale factor describes the relationship between two similar figures. 7.G.A.1	- Given two similar figures, how do we find the scale factor? - How can we use a map or a scaled drawing to find the actual distance between two points? - How does applying scale factor affect the areas and perimeters of scaled figures? - When applying a scale factor, how do you know if the new drawing will be larger, smaller, or the same as the original drawing? - Which attributes change and which stay the same between a figure and its scaled copy?
- In scaled figures, measures of corresponding angles are equal, and ratios of each pair of corresponding sides are equivalent. 7.G.A.1	- How can we use scale factor to find missing side lengths of scaled figures? - How can you tell if two figures are scaled copies of each other?

Key Knowledge and Skills (Procedural Skill and Application)

My students will be able to (Do)...
- Identify and correctly name corresponding sides and angles in scaled figures. 7.G.A.1
- Find scale factor between two similar figures. 7.G.A.1
- Use map scale to determine actual distance. 7.G.A.1
- Use scale factor to find missing side lengths of similar figures. 7.G.A.1
- Reproduce scale drawings at different scales. 7.G.A.1

Being able to generalize mathematical concepts to build conceptual understanding is critical for students with unfinished learning and diverse learners. Teachers can then create tasks that allow students to demonstrate their understanding in different ways and practice academic content language.

Notice how the language goals are aligned to the math standards 7.R.P.A.2a and 7.R.P.A.2d and how multiple language exemplars serve as models for the type of language mathematicians might use to justify and explain their mathematical thinking.

[WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Mathematics Standards](#)
3: English language learners **communicate** information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of **mathematics**.

Language Goals	Language Exemplars
Explain how to use scale drawings to find actual distances. (7.G.A.1)	- On the 1 cm : 50 km scale map, each centimeter represents 5 times as much actual distance as on the 1 cm: 10 km map. That means that on the 1 cm : 50 km map the distance from Cleveland to Cincinnati will be one fifth as much or 8 cm. - The actual distance from Cleveland to Cincinnati is 400 km. If 1cm on the map represents 10km, then 40 cm represents 400km because 40 x 10= 400. On the second map, 1cm represents 50km, so the distance on the map is 8cm because 400 / 50 = 8.

Academic Language is the language needed to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It consists of language at the word, sentence, and discourse level.
*Use the [Grade 7 Unit 1 Language by Lesson](#) and the [Open Up Grade 7 Glossary](#) to determine lesson specific language expectations.

Content Specific Words	scaled copy, original, polygon, correspond, scale factor, figure, segment, quadrilateral, measurement, distance, reciprocal, area, one-dimensional, two-dimensional, squared, scale drawing, scale, represent, actual, three-dimensional, estimate, travel, constant speed, floorplan, approximate, dimension, scale without units, equivalent scales
Language Functions	represent, generalize, explain
Sentence level language supports	[Supports Specific to Key Functions](#)

Academic Language is the language needed to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It consists of language at the word, sentence, and discourse level.
*Use the Grade 7 Unit 2 Language by Lesson and the Open Up Grade 7 Glossary to determine lesson specific language expectations.

Content Specific Words	equivalent ratios, constant of proportionality, proportional relationship, value, row, column, relate, constant, per, reciprocal, equation, quotient, steady, situation, volume, surface area, origin, plot, coordinate plane, quantity, axes, coordinates, x-coordinate, y-coordinate, reasonable
Language Functions	Compare, interpret, generalize
Sentence level language supports	Supports Specific to Key Functions
Discourse level language supports	Academic Discourse Sentence Starters
ICLD Resources	Collaborative Structures Academic Rigor: Supports for Multilingual Learners ICLD One Pager (SERVE)

Note how a clear definition of academic language is provided that includes language at the word, sentence, and discourse level (beyond vocabulary). Links to language support at all three of these levels are included.

Links to these resources are available above in "Additional Resources"

Example 14: English Language Arts
Long Beach Unified School District

Teachers need to support students in understanding different language patterns and discipline-specific ways of communicating in writing. Simply assigning a writing task or including a mentor text is not enough to support the varied writing and linguistic needs of our diverse learners. In this ELA exemplar from Long Beach Unified School District, explicit writing instruction of an argument text is provided throughout the unit of instruction, rather than waiting until the end of the unit. By scaffolding the writing process through a clear and focused instructional sequence (blue section in exemplar), both the students and the teachers are set up for success.

LONG BEACH
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area, Standard, and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 8 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.8.1)
Why is this an example of Key Feature 6?	In order to ensure student attainment of grade-level writing standards, this district's unit of instruction describes specific instructional moves and scaffolds teachers will use to guide students as they deconstruct arguments in texts and construct a problem/solution essay. Within this unit, explicit writing instruction is provided in the following ways: (a) analysis of the key elements of an argument text (specifically, problem/solution essay) and language resources used to support claims; (b) modeling via think alouds and use of mentor texts to note text structure and function of

specific language resources; (c) group brainstorm around essay topic ideas related to the writing prompt; (d) guided writing of the text type; and (e) ample opportunities for collaborative conversations.

In addition, students engage with various texts and keep an evidence log throughout the unit which supports their building of background knowledge, including points and counterpoints around the topic they will be writing about.
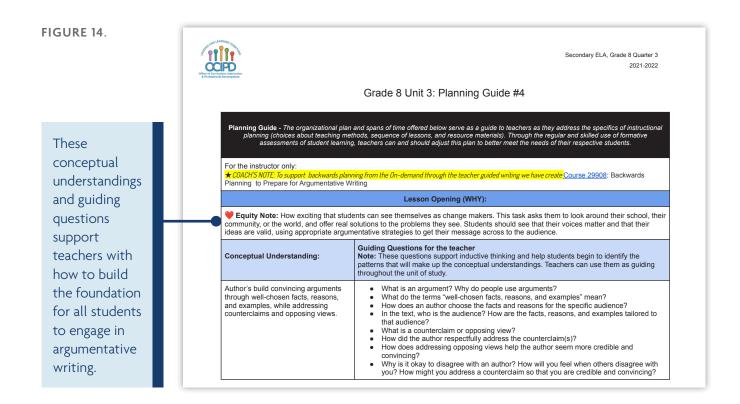
Finally, the curriculum offers differentiation resources and strategies that allow students to formulate and demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways aligned to the standards-based learning tasks. These can be used as student planning tools and/or in small group instruction to further support diverse learners.

Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar begins with a Lesson Opening that describes the WHY of the learning around argumentative texts and makes the connection to the unit topic, *What Matters/Taking a Stand*. Next, this exemplar highlights key instructional moves to support students with understanding, critiquing, responding, and producing argumentative texts (specific focus on problem/solution writing). Lastly, the exemplar offers differentiation resources, aligned to the writing task, to further support the needs of diverse learners.
Additional Resources	Universal Design for Learning Resource Guide Argument Slide Deck (EL Resources) *Scaffolding tool Evidence Log LBUSD Graduate Profile

FIGURE 14.

These conceptual understandings and guiding questions support teachers with how to build the foundation for all students to engage in argumentative writing.

Each of these instructional moves creates multiple ways in which a teacher can plan for the unit. It provides examples of how students are supported with deconstructing the text type and engaging in the writing process.

Academic Discourse Instructional Moves (Teacher will guide students by):	Critical Concepts (Student will <u>Know</u>):	Key Skills (Student will <u>Do</u>):	◎ Assessment of Learning (Student will <u>Show</u> they can):
Understanding the text Using the "first read, second read" model, use the "first read" time to help students understand how the text is structured in three shifts of content. ☐ Noting key words and transitions between the shifts in content	☐ Text structure ☐ Transitions ☐ Claim	☐ Identify shifts in how the text is structured (Irving's life experiences, his message to kids, and current projects and plans) ☐ Determine which sentences signal the shifts in text to a new concept ☐ Identify the claim	☐ Explain how the use of the structure of the text affects the development of the claim.
Critiquing a Text Metacognitively model for students how the author crafted the problem/solution aspect of this text ☐ Knowing that students will be writing their own problem solution essay, this will allow them an opportunity to see how another author crafted such a text	☐ Problem-Solution	☐ Identify two or more problems the individual faced in the text ☐ Identify the solutions presented to those problems ☐ Listen to metacognitive explanation of how author explained the problem and proposed a solution	☐ Explain how the author structured the text to proposed solutions to perceived problems (in preparation for up-coming writing)
Responding to the text Guiding students through a discussion, that may spark joy inspiration as they innovate together	☐ Problem/Solution ☐ Innovative Ideas ☐ Determination	☐ Participate in a class discussion around problems and solutions ☐ Encourage peers to create innovative solutions to common problems	☐ Using norms, contribute to a class discussion without judgment, but rather encouraging ideas from one another
Responding to the text ☐ Prepare students to participate in a Fishbowl in which the respectfully debate opposing views	☐ Debate ☐ Opposing viewpoints ☐ Defend position	☐ Actively participate in a discussion ☐ Listen to others ☐ Ask questions of peers	☐ Present position, defending with evidence from text ☐ Explain how the discussion went, including their contribution
Producing Text Gradual release of responsibility: ☐ Writing sample of essay as a model for students while using metacognition around each step of the process	☐ Elements of argument ☐ Effective transitions ☐ Appropriate openings and closings ☐ Relevant and sufficient evidence	☐ Evaluate possible problems and solutions for most relevant ☐ Analyze the problem for causes and best solutions ☐ Evaluation solutions by determining order of importance ☐ Address counterclaims ☐ Organize writing into logical and coherent manner ☐ Utilize oral rehearsal as a revision strategies	☐ Write a carefully crafted argument that supports a claim, addresses counterclaims, uses sufficient and relevant evidence and reasoning, and provides a concluding statement

Note how the guidance also focuses on how the text is structured as well as metacognitively modeling how the author crafted the problem/solution aspect of the text, which help students to "see" the structure of an argumentative text and how specific language resources are used to signal shifts or transitions from one idea to the next.

Teacher-Guided Performance Task: During this time teachers will give explicit writing instruction that guides students through the writing process.

Learning Plan #5: Writing - 8-9 50-minute periods

Standards- Based Concepts and Planning (What am I teaching?)	myPerspectives Resources	Differentiation Resources

Writing Learning Target: (What?)
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.8.1)
  A. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
  B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
  C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
  D. Establish and maintain a formal style.
  E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
 	
★ *COACH'S NOTE: We have completed a task analysis of the standards for your use in designing possible mini-lessons that students might need in order to show mastery of the standard(s) through the closing assessment.*
  ● Introduce a clear claim/thesis that introduces a problem and offers a valid solution
  ● Plan to address counterclaims to make your argument stronger
  ● Plan and organize writing to logically explain thesis
	TE Guidance Pages:
	Write an argument TE p. 296-301
	
	Mentor Text:
	"Freedom of the Press" TE p. 258-259 is an example of an argument. Students can go back to look at how the argument was crafted to help guide their own writing.
	
	❤️**Equity Note:**
	Have students use oral rehearsal to both share their writing with others, while getting feedback during this drafting stage.
	
	Connection to Essential Question:
	Students are being asked to write a problem-solution essay about a problem they think needs to be solved. This requires students to explore the essential question: When is it right to take a stand?
	
	Supportive Resources:
	  ● Resource Pages TE R6-R11 (examples essays and rubric)
	  ● Revision Focus Pronoun and Antecedent Agreement TE p. 299
	  ● Revision Focus Maintain a Formal Style/Tone TE p. 300
	  ● What is an argument?
		Reading	Khan	★**Universal Design for Learning Resource Guide:**
				If a student needs additional support for writing, then review this option: Teaching Voice Typing with Google Docs (Video) - (UDL Element = Action and Expression: Vary the methods for response and navigation)
				
				EL Resources:
				Review the language for introducing a counterclaim and including a rebuttal:
				  ● For Emerging: Use this Slide Deck to help them visualize and practice writing the counterclaim and rebuttal.
				  ● For Expanding & Bridging ELs:

A task analysis of the standards included in the lesson is provided to alert the teacher to potential targeted or discrete skills where mini-lessons might be beneficial as just-in-time support to address or bolster unfinished learning and in response to formative assessments.

Resources for differentiating instruction offer multiple ways (and tools) for students to process information, demonstrate understanding, and formulate ideas during the writing process. Diverse learners are able to engage in rigorous writing tasks aligned to standards-based learning, while simultaneously being supported with their unique needs.

● Include concrete details, quotations, and examples
  ● Use transitions to create cohesion, especially cause-and-effect vocabulary
  ● Use a concluding statement to complete the writing
 	
Revising and Editing:
  ● Craft sentences in which the subject and verb agree in number
  ● Use transitions to show cause, effect, and examples
  ● Revise to Heighten Interest (Combine sentences to reduce choppiness, eliminate repetition, and add clarity)
  ● Edit for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 	
Relevance: (Why?) Words hold power, so you want to be sure to tailor your words to your purpose and audience so that your words will transmit your message clearly and effectively. LBUSD Graduate Profile
 	
Closing Assessment aligned to the rigor of the standards: (How?)
Students should be able to prove they have learned how to craft a well-written argument by *stating* a precise claim, *using* sufficient evidence and relevant reasoning, and *concluding* in a logical manner that supports the position.
Prompt:
Write a problem-and-solution essay on these questions: What is a problem you think needs to be solved? How would you solve it?
	Academy
	  ● Incorporating opposing viewpoints
		Reading	Khan Academy
			
			Closing Assessment:
			  ● Teacher guided student slidedeck
			
			Student Metacognitive Reflection:
			  ● What did you learn while writing your argument?
			  ● What was the most challenging aspect of composing your argument?
			  ● What did you learn from reviewing the work of others and discussing your argument with your classmates?
				Use the They Say/ I Say Handout to review the Language of counterclaim (page 1, bottom right-hand corner)
				  ● Review key academic vocabulary such as retort, candid, rectify, speculate, verify

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KEY FEATURE ⑦

The district's standards-based curriculum supports the effective use of technology to enhance grade-level instruction and student engagement.

Why is this important?

With the infusion of technology into everyday life, the integration of technology into teaching and learning is no longer a "bonus feature" for learning activities. It is important that students have access to technology-driven learning opportunities throughout the curriculum, ensuring stimulating and engaging instructional delivery whether remotely, in-person, or in hybrid classrooms. Technology, including assistive technology for students with disabilities, allows teaching and learning to happen inside and outside of the classroom walls. When used appropriately, it can also accelerate project-based learning, promote collaboration and innovation, and advance the development of communication and research skills through expanded access to primary and secondary sources. It also has the potential to serve as a tool to accommodate diverse learning and language development needs (e.g. read aloud, text-to-speech, visual accessibility, translation, and interpretation).

In addition to its role as a learning tool, the onset of the recent pandemic demonstrated the great potential of technology in providing curriculum guidance, professional development, and professional learning communities for staff within and across schools. Technology should not be used as the core of the instructional delivery model but as a supplemental tool to enhance instruction and engagement facilitated and monitored by teachers. Districts should consider the appropriate "use case" so there is student-to-student and student-to- teacher interaction (any curriculum guidance should carefully think about evolving technologies, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and their curriculum and instructional implications). Districts should provide explicit guidance and considerations for the use of various technology platforms, programs, apps, and assistive tools that are targeted to students' specific accommodations related to the tasks.

What does this look like?

Any use of technology should serve to advance instruction, not distract from it. Moreover, technology should not simply take the place of pencil and paper assignments or mimic a physical classroom onscreen, but should fundamentally enhance and deepen the learning experience. For this to occur, ongoing curriculum guidance, resources, and professional development should integrate opportunities to utilize

technology as a tool, including how to accommodate for students with diverse and special learning needs. To ensure that these tools are aligned to instructional standards and advance grade-level learning, a district's curriculum should embed supports for the effective use of technology as a tool for both students and teachers. This includes strategies for students in using technology to develop grade-level knowledge and skills, as well as guidance for teachers in integrating technology into classroom instruction and assignments to address unfinished learning; deepen learning; provide just-in-time support as needed; and encourage student engagement. In order to ensure instructional continuity in times of crisis, a district curriculum should also include tools and guidance on ways in which instruction and student assignments should be adapted for remote or hybrid learning environments, as well as guidance on assessing online student work.

The curriculum should also ensure that students continue to build their proficiency and sophistication as users of technology as they progress from grade to grade. With the availability of information, students must develop the knowledge and critical thinking skills to evaluate the quality and validity of information online. Students should transition from accessing only curated resources to searching and selecting online resources independently in later grades.
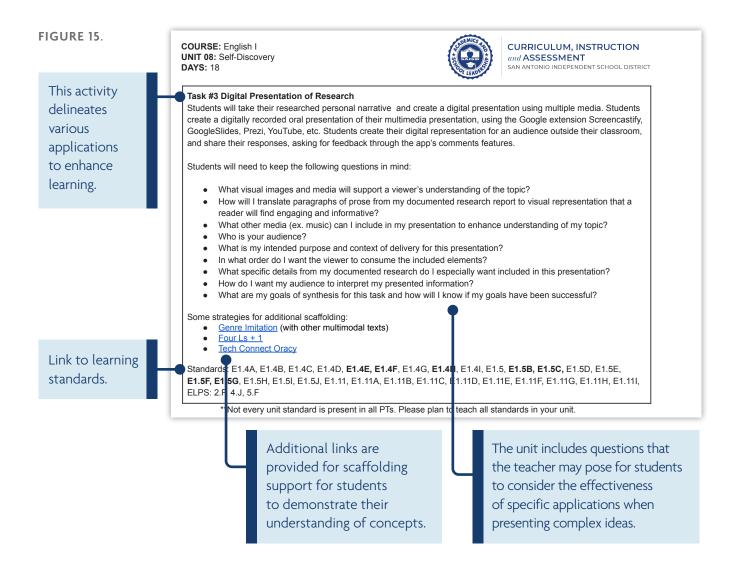
Example 15: English Language Arts
San Antonio Independent School District

This exemplar, from San Antonio Independent School District, requires that students integrate technology into their research presentation. Students use multi-media as an integral component of the learning process, to enhance specific concepts of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description of content.

San Antonio
SAISD Independent School District

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 9
Why is this an example of Key Feature 7?	This exemplar highlights how technology is integral to, and not separate from, specific learning outcomes. Specific technologies (e.g., YouTube, Prezi) are highlighted to be used in developing digital presentations. This example promotes student agency by providing multiple options in selecting technologies while asking them to consider how each technology enhances outcomes. Teachers have multiple options for using technologies that facilitate student creativity. The concepts learned and skills practiced can be used in both virtual and hybrid learning environments.
Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar identifies the specific course, unit, and allocated days for the content. An overview of the task is provided with specific recommendation for relevant technology. Guiding questions are provided to assist students in integrating technology to enhance the concepts presented and increase accessibility. Links are provided for specific scaffolding strategies.

FIGURE 15.

This activity delineates various applications to enhance learning.

COURSE: English I
UNIT 08: Self-Discovery
DAYS: 18

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION *and* ASSESSMENT
SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Task #3 Digital Presentation of Research
Students will take their researched personal narrative and create a digital presentation using multiple media. Students create a digitally recorded oral presentation of their multimedia presentation, using the Google extension Screencastify, GoogleSlides, Prezi, YouTube, etc. Students create their digital representation for an audience outside their classroom, and share their responses, asking for feedback through the app's comments features.

Students will need to keep the following questions in mind:

- What visual images and media will support a viewer's understanding of the topic?
- How will I translate paragraphs of prose from my documented research report to visual representation that a reader will find engaging and informative?
- What other media (ex. music) can I include in my presentation to enhance understanding of my topic?
- Who is your audience?
- What is my intended purpose and context of delivery for this presentation?
- In what order do I want the viewer to consume the included elements?
- What specific details from my documented research do I especially want included in this presentation?
- How do I want my audience to interpret my presented information?
- What are my goals of synthesis for this task and how will I know if my goals have been successful?

Some strategies for additional scaffolding:
- Genre Imitation (with other multimodal texts)
- Four Ls + 1
- Tech Connect Oracy

Link to learning standards.

Standards: E1.4A, E1.4B, E1.4C, E1.4D, **E1.4E, E1.4F**, E1.4G, **E1.4H**, E1.4I, E1.5, **E1.5B, E1.5C,** E1.5D, E1.5E, **E1.5F, E1.5G**, E1.5H, E1.5I, E1.5J, E1.11, E1.11A, E1.11B, E1.11C, E1.11D, E1.11E, E1.11F, E1.11G, E1.11H, E1.11I, ELPS: 2.F, 4.J, 5.F

**Not every unit standard is present in all PTs. Please plan to teach all standards in your unit.

Additional links are provided for scaffolding support for students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts.

The unit includes questions that the teacher may pose for students to consider the effectiveness of specific applications when presenting complex ideas.

While the exemplar from San Antonio focuses on the use of multi-media applications as an integral part of the learning process, the following exemplar from Dallas Independent School District illustrates the use of technology to enhance instructional effectiveness. The Engage Activity focuses on how to describe human genetics, including the transcription and translation of genetics, the different DNA across genes, and how this may be relevant to their own life.

Example 16: Science
Dallas Independent School District

This exemplar from Dallas Independent School District illustrates how technology can be used as a tool for student exploration. Students use technology to engage in experimentation as they explore important concepts in genetics.

DALLAS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area	Science, Biology
Why is this an example of Key Feature 7?	This exemplar demonstrates how various technologies can be used to enhance instruction through skill building. For example, students can manipulate variables on a virtual model (e.g., Gene Machine). The unit includes additional uses of technology that could be delivered in a virtual or hybrid environment including the use of video (e.g., Amoeba Sisters) and the use of closed captions for EL learners.
Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar utilizes engagement techniques and begins with an overarching idea, followed by specific questions that students can use to engage in the concepts. After the discussion, technology (video) is used to provide new modalities that reinforce the concepts discussed. Exploration techniques are then used with modeling technology to apply abstract concepts (gene manipulation) to a virtual model and allow for direct application of concepts.
Additional Resources	Engage Activity Explore Activity, Gene Machine

FIGURE 16.

The activity demonstrates use of technology for virtual modeling.

The district guidance uses yellow highlights to alert teachers to the essential content and activities for the lesson/unit.

2021-22 Biology - Quarter 2
Unit 06: Genetics and Epigenetics

SCIENCE & WELLNESS
Dallas Independent School District

Explore: (Day 1)

Modeling Prokaryotic Operons. Gene regulation can be a difficult topic to understand because the control mechanisms are too small to visualize. It may be easier for your students to compare different modes of gene suppression and gene induction if they build models of these processes. In this activity, students will create models of repressible and inducible operons (*lac* operon and *trp* operon) used by bacteria for protein transcript regulation.

Alternatively, students can do the PhET activity, Gene Machine: The Lac Operon. In this activity, students will manipulate variables to observe the effects of that variable on a virtual model of the *lac* operon. Students will complete the PhET Simulation Lac Operon sheet as they progress through this activity.

Student Engagement Strategy / Resource:
Students will manipulate variables using models to understand gene regulation in prokaryotic cells.

Question Stems:
- *How is the lac operon regulated?*
- *What is a promoter?*
- *Why is the lac operon "off" when lactose is absent?*
- *Why is it beneficial for E. coli to turn this gene "on" and "off" in response to the lactose in its environment?*
- *Why do these genes need to be located next to one another and controlled by the same operator/promoter?*

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The activity can be completed in virtual or hybrid environment (denoted with icons).

The district guidance includes closed captions for EL students.

The student engagement strategy allows students to connect information learned from the video to gene regulation.

Engage Activity

Engage: (Day 1)

Tell the students that humans have an estimated 30,000 genes. Have students discuss with an elbow partner:

1. Why wouldn't you expect all these genes to be transcribed and translated at the same time?
2. Do all of the cells in your body contain the same DNA? How do they become structurally and functionally unique?
3. What might be an analogy to this in your own life?

Engage students in a class discussion. Students will record their answers in their science notebooks.

Students will then watch Amoeba Sisters: Gene Regulation and the Order of the Operon. Students will define what an operon is and how prokaryotes regulate gene expression in their science notebooks.

For EL students: Students can turn on captions for the video and have them translated into their preferred language by clicking on Auto-translate in the Caption menu.

After viewing the video, revisit the class discussion question and have students provide more detailed answers using an Idea Shuffle strategy. Students should now record these answers in their biology notebook.

Student Engagement Strategy / Resource:
Students will use the Idea Shuffle strategy to generate ideas about the importance of gene regulation in prokaryotes and eukaryotes.

Question Stems:
- *What is gene regulation?*
- *How are genes regulated in prokaryotic cells?*
- *What is an operon?*
- *How is the lac operon regulated?*
- *What are some ways that you think eukaryotic cells can regulate their genes?*
- *What is the role of the environment in gene regulation?*

Explore Activity

KEY FEATURE 8

The district's standards-based curriculum provides guidance and resources for integrating social emotional learning (SEL) and skill-building into core content instruction.

Why is this important?

From the trauma of school violence to the grief and loss brought forth by a global pandemic, attending to the mental and social emotional wellbeing of students is an essential consideration in how we educate and support students. In the context of COVID-19 and other trauma, districts have come to understand that addressing mental health needs and cultivating social emotional wellness is not only a moral obligation, but an essential condition for learning. To support academic achievement, districts must provide a continuum of support and services to students and educators alike.

It is important that educators shift their strategies and approach when it comes to ensuring student well-being. Historically, addressing mental health and wellness was not universally prioritized by schools or districts, falling outside of what they saw as their primary role. When schools did become involved, it was often in the context of problematic behavior or warning signs—such as students exhibiting aggression or antisocial behavior. This leads to interventions designed to address these issues on a student-by-student basis once a student's struggles have become evident to counselors or disruptive to the instructional environment. This "wait to fail" approach has detrimental effects on long term social and academic outcomes. To mitigate this "wait to fail" approach, it is important to shift to a proactive approach—one in which educators promote the development of important interpersonal skills and learning behaviors such as self-regulation, persisting with rigorous content, and building self-confidence as a learner. These skills and behaviors allow students to fully engage in grade-level instruction and to recognize their role in a learning community where all students are seen, heard, and welcomed.

What does this look like?

Social emotional learning is an essential aspect of effective Tier 1 instruction, and can help educators in building and maintaining supportive learning communities. Curriculum guidance should provide schools and teachers with resources, strategies, and data-driven best practices for integrating SEL

into the school day and within classroom instruction. There should also be preventative screening of students to inform early intervention, including using data to provide individualized supports.

Social emotional learning and skill-building should not be relegated to short, sporadic activities disconnected from everyday classroom instruction, but rather integrated into classroom experiences. To be most effective, social emotional learning should be integrated and measured within units and lessons across core content areas. Curriculum guidance, along with professional development, should equip teachers with the necessary strategies for designing lessons and building learning communities that support both the academic and social emotional development of students.

Example 17: Mathematics
San Diego Unified School District

The following is an excerpt from a unit called "A Mathematician Like Me," for students in grades six through 12 in the San Diego Unified School District. This unit appears at the beginning of the year and is an example of an integrated social-emotional learning (SEL) and skill-building opportunity explicitly connected to mathematics instruction. Specifically, students explore their mathematical identity as an individual and as a part of the classroom community. In addition, the unit highlights strengths that students bring to the classroom from prior experiences and builds upon their strengths during activities implemented as a classroom community.

San Diego Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area and Grade	Mathematics, Grades 6-12
Why is this an example of Key Feature 8?	This activity is an example of Key Feature 8 as the social emotional learning and skill building activity is integrated with the application of mathematical skills (e.g., univariate statistics). These data are then used to inform a series of guiding questions and activities, such as identifying personal areas of strength and growth in mathematics. The lesson activity allows students to reflect on their mathematical identity and connect it to a diverse body of mathematicians. Self-awareness is the SEL competency illustrated in this example.
Structure of the Exemplar	There is an introduction to the assignment with an overarching guiding question for the activities that follow. The exemplar has two benchmarks that will help the teacher identify adequate progress towards the final outcome and uses specific guiding questions.

Additional Resources	Sample Rubric for Mathematician Like Me: https://docs.google.com/document/d/12ySNoHG9IUCQLkScyj8UQVqHVinwfBswJY1i7 2PckWg/edit CASEL Framework: https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/

FIGURE 17.

A Mathematician Like Me

Project Description
Grades 6-12

In this project, students will explore their mathematical identity as an individual and as a part of the classroom community. They will highlight the strengths that they bring to the community based on their experiences in math classes historically and on some shared experiences throughout these two weeks. They will also learn about mathematicians throughout history and locate window and mirror moments in these selections. Their final product will be a Mathematician Self Portrait including an image of their face and a collection of their strengths, areas of growth, window & mirror mathematicians, and a statement of mathematical purpose to be shared with someone in their family.

Student facing organizer
Sample student work

Essential Question	Why does the world need a mathematician like **me**?
Launch *The purpose of the launch is to necessitate the project and establish some common understanding about what will be created.*	(option 1) Mathematical empathy interviews done in pairs in breakout rooms. (option 2) Sara Van Der Werf's Blog: Name Tents Digital Desmos Version with questions similar to the empathy interview questions *Everyone -* Sharing of sample final product with a brainstorm about what makes the final product "quality work". Students share language that becomes part of the final rubric. A sample rubric is linked here.
Benchmark #1 *The purpose of a benchmark is to have the students submit a draft of the final project or a portion of the final project to show progress.*	*Strengths and areas of growth (personally and communally). At the end of the first week, students will identify their strengths and areas of growth from the week and reflect on these questions. They will create a first draft of their Mathematician Self Portrait with a picture of themselves and their strengths and areas of growth.* *Reflection questions:* 1. What are your mathematical strengths and how did you show them this week during our activities? 2. What are your areas of mathematical growth and how was this seen during our activities this week? 3. Why does the world need a mathematician like you?
Benchmark #2	*Windows and Mirrors. During the middle of the second week, the students will complete their windows and mirrors activity where they will create a slide as a part of a slide deck that will represent their window and mirror mathematicians.* *Reflection questions:* 1. Who are the mathematicians that provided window and mirror opportunities for you and how did they help you learn more about yourself?
Final Product *The final product is what the students make for the project. It is intended to be shared with an audience and represents all of the learning on the final product.*	Students will create a "mathematician like me" self portrait including required components: ● Mathematical strengths using evidence from one of the activities ● Areas of growth using evidence from one of the activities ● Window mathematician with explanation of why ● Mirror mathematician with explanation of why ● Screenshot of work from one of the activities with explanation ● Mathematical Purpose Statement or quote

The guidance connects the mathematics content to a SEL outcome. This integration provides sufficient clarity for integration into classroom experiences.

The curriculum guidance includes links to sample student work products.

The guidance includes links to rubrics and ways to measure student outcomes.

The guidance integrates mathematics content with theSEL competency of self-awareness. Questions promote ongoing assessment of skill building.

Example 18: English Language Arts
Long Beach Unified School District

The following English Language Arts example, from Long Beach Unified School District, includes an overview of how to connect reading activities to specific activities allowing students to practice responsible decision-making skills. Responsbile decision-making is one of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) five SEL competencies. Each of the three reading activities is linked to a learning standard and includes resources to embed SEL activities.

LONG BEACH
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts, Grade 8
Why is this an example of Key Feature 8?	This exemplar demonstrates an integrated curriculum using the CASEL framework to guide specific learning activities and planning documents. The SEL skill in the exemplar is responsible decision-making. The exemplar uses icons to denote key connections, including equity. This example is reflective of Key Feature 8 by providing specific guidance on how to integrate the concepts of social emotional learning into advanced reading skills, such as analyzing text and making connections between individuals and ideas. The SEL competency, responsible decision-making, is highlighted using an example scenario.
Structure of the Exemplar	This exemplar begins with a goal for whole-class learning, and has three connecting columns including standards-based concepts, resources for connecting to SEL, Essential Unit Questions, and resources for differentiation for English learners.

FIGURE 18.

The guidance includes links to the reading activity and the standards.

The guidance includes connections between the academic content and responsible decision-making using a sample student scenario.

Secondary ELA, Grade 8 Quarter 3
2021-2022

Whole-Class Learning: During this section students will encounter more rigorous texts, and the teacher is expected to provide robust guidance and scaffolding to help students access the text and discuss and explore these larger ideas to come to a deeper understanding.

Learning Plan #2: 4 50-minute periods

Standards- Based Concepts and Planning (What am I teaching?)	myPerspectives Resources	Differentiation Resources
Reading Learning Target: (What?) ● Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (RI.8.1) ● Analyze how the text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (RI.8.3) ● Analyze in detail the structure of specific paragraphs, including the role particular sentences in developing and refining key concepts (RI 8.5) ● Determine an author's purpose in a text and how the acknowledge conflicting viewpoints (RI 8.6) ★ *COACH'S NOTE: We have completed a task analysis of the standards for your use in designing possible mini-lessons that students might need in order to show mastery of the standard(s) through the closing assessment.*	**Core Text:** "Barrington Irving, Pilot and Educator" TE p.264A-275 "Barrington Irving 30 Dollars in my Pocket" PBS video ❤️ **Equity Note: Transformative SEL (T-SEL)** Self-Awareness and Responsible Decision Making: Irving was faced with serious problems as he tried to reach his goal. However, he comes up with very innovative solutions. Students have a voice and have innovative ideas. Allow them to discuss common problems they see at school or in the community and challenge themselves and their peers to create innovative solutions to those problems - allow for fun and creativity as part of the discussion. **Connection to the Unit Essential Question:** Barrington Irving took a stand to reach his goal, even when others didn't think he could. Throughout his experience, he was faced with problems and had to create his own solutions. No matter what one's background is, they are capable of doing great things when they put their heart and mind into their goals.	**EL Resources:** ● Assign Audio Summary in the Realize digital platform (📷) to ELs before reading to provide background and context. ● Using the audio version available in the Pearson/ Savvas Realize digital platform, students can listen to the audio recording of the text while they read along. (How-to 📷 for students) ● Nouns and Pronouns

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The curriculum guidance used icons to denote connections to equity.

The second scenario depicts advanced application of targeted SEL competency.

KEY FEATURE 9

The district's standards-based curriculum provides teachers with guidance on where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations, including links to supporting instructional resources.

Why is this important?

There is no perfect textbook or set of materials, and no digital resource is perfect for every classroom. Districts do have access to tools, such as the Council's Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool, Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners, and Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners, designed to help them assess the quality and degree of alignment to college- and career-readiness standards in various materials.

The goal of curriculum guidance should be to support teachers in identifying the best resources to use for teaching content and optimizing rigorous instruction, so students can achieve their greatest potential. It is important for districts to be clear about how textbooks and instructional materials should be used as tools for teaching—and where gaps may exist—so that schools and teachers can plan accordingly. Leaving teachers to search for resources wastes their time and may lead to a high degree of variation in the quality and type of materials to which students are exposed. Moreover, it is important to make sure that teachers understand that such guidance is not intended to stifle professional creativity, but rather to foster flexibility in meeting the needs and interests of their students.

What does it look like?

Districts should strive for the greatest possible level of transparency in the guidance it provides teachers for using textbooks, materials, and other instructional resources. This means explicitly identifying where materials are effective in reinforcing high-quality, standards-based instruction; where and how the teacher will need to augment the materials; and areas that can be skipped. Additionally, curriculum guidance should draw teachers' attention to misleading statements, cautions, or misrepresentations within the materials referenced.

To ensure that teachers are equipped to address these gaps in textbooks, materials, and other instructional resources, curriculum writers should pair this guidance with references, links, or supplementary resources. Districts should plan to be as specific as possible—simply listing resources without page numbers or links is insufficient. Plan to provide teachers with an organized, easily navigable list of materials and resources that are accessible for instruction. This includes indicating which materials are required and which are recommended for a particular grade level or grade span. It is also helpful to include annotations of what teachers will find in each of the resources referenced. This is particularly useful when listing multiple resources so teachers can decide which ones best suit their students' interests while addressing particular standards.

The district's professional development programming should reinforce this guidance and deepen teachers' expertise in using instructional materials and resources, equipping them with the skills they need to select rigorous texts and tasks for students and design daily lessons that address diverse student needs.

Example 19: Mathematics

In this math example, the district curriculum included specific guidance for teachers to consider when using data sets and graphs from a variety of online sources (i.e., newspapers, magazines, or journals). This includes indicating where the materials are strong, where the basal is insufficient, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations.
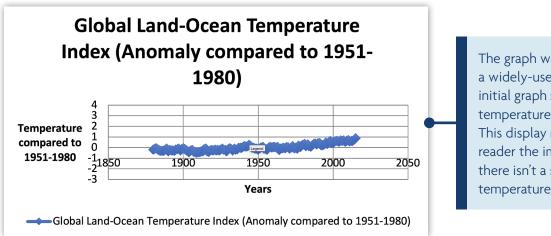
Content Area and Grade	Mathematics, Grade 8
Why is this an example of Key Feature 9?	The curriculum provides guidance on how teachers can support students in becoming discerning and wise consumers of data. It also cautions teachers about the choice of data sources, including where gaps exist, and how to address them to meet district expectations. Recognizing that the current basal textbook contains outdated information, the guidance suggests that teachers use a variety of primary sources, especially data sets and graphical representations. To illustrate the importance of choosing a variety of data sources, the guidance includes an example where the same set of data is represented in two different ways to convey different meanings to the reader. The guidance stresses that it is important to verify the source of the data, critically examine graphical representations, and ask clarifying questions.
Structure of the Exemplar	Two graphs, from a well-known journal, are provided as guidance for teachers to consider with students during a grade eight unit on investigating patterns of association in bivariate data.

FIGURE 19.
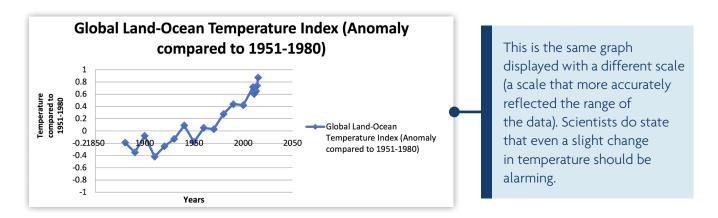
In grade eight, students are expected to make inferences based on scatter plots and other data displays. Even though the textbook includes a variety of suggestions for students to make inferences and engage with mathematical modeling problems, most of the data sources are already outdated. You will need to supplement using data and graphs from a variety of primary sources. It is imperative that we help students become wise consumers of data and to question the validity of the same data obtained from different sources. Do choose a variety of data resources so that students can see how different data displays may lead one to a different conclusion. This includes choosing the appropriate range to accurately reflect the data and consider how modest changes may distort inferences made based on the data. For example, one widely used journal attempted to sway their readers by distorting the scale of the data to foster the belief that global warming and climate change are small concerns. Using the actual data set from NASA, teachers should notice that the actual range or scale for the graph does not accurately reflect the data. It is important that we push students to critically examine data sources and consider implications of the data presented from multiple viewpoints.

Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data.

- Construct and interpret scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to investigate patterns of association between quantities. Describe patterns such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear association, and nonlinear association.

- Know that straight lines are widely used to model relationships between two quantitative variables. For scatter plots that suggest a linear association, informally fit a straight line, and informally assess the model fit by judging the closeness of the data points to the line.

Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index (Anomaly compared to 1951-1980)

The graph was adapted from a widely-used journal. The initial graph showed changes in temperature from 1880–2015. This display may give the reader the impression that there isn't a significant rise in temperatures.

Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index (Anomaly compared to 1951-1980)

This is the same graph displayed with a different scale (a scale that more accurately reflected the range of the data). Scientists do state that even a slight change in temperature should be alarming.

Example 20: U.S. History
Long Beach Unified School District

In anticipation of rewriting the course outlines and creating Understanding by Design (UBD) unit documents for each course affected by the 2021-22 textbook adoption, Long Beach Unified School District created curriculum addenda. These curriculum addenda serve as a bridge between what their 2016 course outlines provide with the expected curriculum changes. The curriculum addenda also serve teachers' needs that have been highlighted because of the many social justice movements, the polarizing views about the pandemic, and the district's equity work.

Content Area and Grade	U.S. History: Grade 8
Why is this an example of Key Feature 9?	The curriculum provides guidance on how teachers can support students to become discerning, leading to discussions about historical facts. This unit begins with a discussion of checking for bias to avoid spreading misconceptions, stereotypes, and confusion. Without clearly examining sources for gaps in information or bias towards a group, over time it leads to damaging effects. The guidance stresses that it is important to investigate various primary sources to examine the context and ask clarifying questions.
Structure of the Exemplar	This is an addendum lesson created by the district to emphasize the importance of interrogating resources to determine bias in texts as well as to encourage students to contend with a variety of primary and secondary sources to form text-based opinions. The guidance suggests teachers begin by having students critically examine their text for bias. The guidance includes typical responses along with criteria for determining whether the text is biased or contains significant misconceptions and stereotypes. There is an intentional focus so that Key Features 5 and 9 are aligned to implement culturally- and-linguistically-relevant pedagogy.

FIGURE 20.

Is our textbook biased?

We are going to examine a page from our textbook to determine whether or not it is biased in its portrayal of the Battle of the Alamo
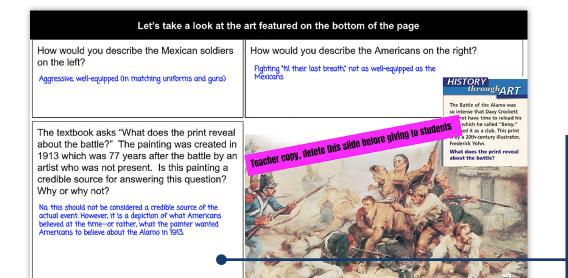
What is bias?
Bias is prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

The district provided guidance so that teachers will know how to make proper adjustments to accurately depict historical content and context.

Students use their text and visuals to examine whether their textbook is biased in portraying the Battle of the Alamo.

The district provided additional activities and primary sources to address historical context and multiple perspectives.

Let's take a look at the art featured on the bottom of the page

How would you describe the Mexican soldiers on the left?

Aggressive, well-equipped (in matching uniforms and guns)

How would you describe the Americans on the right?

Fighting "til their last breath," not as well-equipped as the Mexicans

The textbook asks "What does the print reveal about the battle?" The painting was created in 1913 which was 77 years after the battle by an artist who was not present. Is this painting a credible source for answering this question? Why or why not?

No, this should not be considered a credible source of the actual event. However, it is a depiction of what Americans believed at the time—or rather, what the painter wanted Americans to believe about the Alamo in 1913.

Teacher copy, delete this slide before giving to students

The guidance included typical responses to the question which can serve as examples for teachers.

Is our textbook biased?

What is bias?

Bias is prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

Hint: an author's bias is often expressed *indirectly* through their word choice and through the information they choose to include and/or exclude.

CAUTION!

If you notice the following, the source may be biased:

- Heavily opinionated or one-sided
- Relies on unsupported or unsubstantiated claims
- Presents highly selected facts that lean to a certain outcome
- Pretends to present facts, but offers only opinion
- Uses extreme (exaggerated, stereotypical) or inappropriate language
- Tries to persuade you to think a certain way with no regard for factual evidence
- The author is unidentifiable, lacks expertise, or writes on unrelated topics
- Is entertainment-based or a form of parody or satire
- Tries to sell you something in disguise

After examining the textbook for bias, there are cautions provided for students to use to determine whether their textbook is biased. It would be helpful if teachers were encouraged to have their students create these guidelines based on their conclusions after examining the text and visuals for bias.

Example 21: English Language Arts
Long Beach Unified School District

This excerpt is taken from the district's planning guide for a 5th grade unit. It includes parts of three days of lessons: close reading in a variety of forms, work on the academic vocabulary extracted from the text, and then a series of collaborative conversations that set students up for success for writing about the big idea of the unit. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are all present in the lesson sequence. This planning guide provides guidance in several important forms. First, it offers ways to provide access to the core text (grade level complexity) for all students through supportive teacher moves and familiar scaffolds. Second, it makes recommendations for activities and subsections to skip within the reading comprehension portion of the lessons. With overly-rich instructional materials such as this one, guidance is crucial so teachers can retain a focus on what matters most for student mastery of reading comprehension and improved English language skills attainment. Third, it offers clear pathways to differentiation for teachers in the form of alternative sets of questions or options for end-of-class quick writes. There is attention to elements of universal design throughout this exemplar.

Where additional supports and frames are recommended, they are linked directly in the document for easy access.

LONG BEACH
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Content Area and Grade	English Language Arts – 5th grade Reading Comprehension sequence: RL 5.1, 5.4, 5.10; W 5.9, 5.10; SL 5.1, 5.2, 5.3
Why is this an example of Key Feature 9?	Guidance helps teachers pinpoint the most valuable elements of the lesson sequences, so they can spend time and direct student attention to what matters most for learning. Where the instructional materials fail to support English learners' access to the grade level text, the district guidance supplies direct links to district developed scaffolds and templates with concrete suggestions to fill those gaps. There are several points in the lesson sequence where teachers are provided options for student responses they can easily select or modify for differentiated learning opportunities.
Structure of the Exemplar	The exemplar follows the sequence of the instructional material and is in an easy to follow two-column table.
Additional Resources	See ELSF resource: Analyzing content and language demands

FIGURE 21.

LBUSD Unit 4 Week 3 2021-2022
California Wonders Grade 5

Notice & Wonder Routine:
Provides students an opportunity to notice, wonder, and begin growing ideas about text before the teacher provides input. Inviting students to engage with and talk about text will encourage questioning about what is happening and bring awareness of the language demands. This is formative for the teacher and engaging for the reader.

Day 2-4 Building Knowledge
<u>Comprehension Through Close Reading</u>
❤️**Equity Note - Teacher created Welcome/InclusionActivity and Optimistic Closure daily**

🌞***Coach's Note:***The literature anthology offers a grade-level complex text to support comprehension and meaning making and, often is rich enough to merit 3 days of instruction. If not, you may decide to identify an additional text that supports knowledge building/volume of reading.
❤️***EQUITY NOTE:*** You might consider using the "Rosa" Culturally Responsive Lesson guide linked in place of the following.

<u>First Read/Notice and Wonder</u>Notice and Wonder NoteTaking Tool
● Have each student locate the complex text **"Rosa"** in the Anthology text.
● Remind students of the weekly question and provide a brief overview of the text focusing on the elements of biography. (See T150-T151).
● Provide time for students to explore the text independently, taking notes about what they notice and wonder.
● Read the whole text aloud without stopping and with students following along.
● Possible Guiding Questions:
  o What do you notice? (vocabulary/point of view/genre)
  o What are you wondering? (vocabulary/point of view/genre)

Note the purpose-setting of the first exposure to the text which is followed by an uninterrupted teacher read so every student can get the gist of the selection and have fluency practice at the same time.

Revisit the Text: Questions to Build Understanding
● Reread focus sections of the text together. When appropriate, invite students to read sections aloud to the class during this reading, especially to support their thinking with text evidence.
● Suggested Guiding Questions:
  o Use **Access Complex Text (ACT)** and **"Read"** questions from the TE pgs.T153A-153Q

This focuses teachers on the best questions among too many offered by the materials. The 'ACT' are high-quality, text-focused, and supportive.

● Practice in Knowledge Building/Volume of Reading passages
🌞***Coach's Note:*** In support of our multilingual learners, revisit the vocabulary strategy lessons with EL students in a designated small group opportunity.

Academic Vocabulary Routine
Continue practicing the vocabulary words for the week in a strategic manner. Consider:
● Expand Vocabulary (T164)
● Reinforce the Words (T165)
● Academic Vocabulary (bottom of page T164)
● The volume of reading texts may not have exact vocabulary words for the week. However, the words can be used through discussion and questioning.

🌞***Coach's Note:*** Provide multilingual (EL) students with additional integrated language support through the use of text-specific questioning (see EL sidebar in TE) and effective scaffolds (i.e., Thinking Maps, sentence frames). Additional attention to unpacking text structure with Differentiated Texts during designated small group instruction further increases access to complex text.

Respond to Text Routine:
Provides students with an opportunity to support ideas and arguments with text-based evidence. Inviting students to respond to a prompt using common source materials allows for the teacher to formatively assess comprehension and is a valuable life-long skill for the writer.

Note the academic vocabulary routine and the two coach's notes in support of multilingual learners.

Revisit the Text: Questions to Build Deeper Understanding/Use Evidence

🌟 **Coach's Note:** *This discussion and text study should be intentionally planned with the needs of all students. The questions center on the author's craft and identity, joy, and criticality. Make sure you carefully partner students for support, are clear about what chunks of text they should focus on, and provide the scaffolds for successful access.*

- Reread focus sections of the text together. Use this third read as a chance for students to take on some of the reading.
- ❤️ *EQUITY NOTE : The following questions/activities support access for all, further encourage identity work, increase joyful interactions, and/or deepen childrens' critical consciousness.*
    - Use **"Reread"** questions from TE pgs.T153A-153Q
    - What did Rosa and others in the community do to bring about a positive change? Can you think of another way that could have helped the community bring about change?
    - On page 304, the story says that during the confrontation on the bus, some Black people got off, "recognizing the potential for ugliness." What kind of ugliness were they thinking might occur because Parks was refusing to give up her seat? Why do you think they were anticipating this?
    - Can you think of any current day situations that might promote others to act to make change?
    - What lesson did Rosa Parks teach us?
    - What are different types of nonviolent protests that you have seen in the news? On social media? In person?
    - There are many different forms of activism (animal, global,etc..) What issues do you find important to activate for today?

Note the district has offered its own questions for the text to make up for inadequate ones in the materials. There are many options here. It would be useful to label these clearly as options or perhaps code them for differentiated student work time.

Quick Write Routine:
Provides students with a daily opportunity to develop writing stamina while thinking deeply about the text. Inviting students to make connections to concepts and identify personal/societal aspirations is formative for the teacher and engaging for the writer.

Daily Wrap Up (Connect to Concept/Suggestions for across the week)
- What did you learn today?
- How does it connect to the EQ?
- What can we add to our Tree Map?
- What does this inspire you to do?

🌟 **Coach's Note: Continue to** *capture students new learning/thinking on the Tree Map throughout the week.*

Daily Quick Write Options:
- Describe the chain of events that happened after Rosa Parks was arrested. Who were the people that helped spread the information about the boycott?
- Do you know of any people (famous or not) who have done courageous things to seek positive change? Describe who they are and their actions.
- What did Rosa and others in the community do to bring about a positive change?
- Why is it important for people to stand up for what they believe to be right?
- "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." - Ida B Wells. What does this quote mean to you and how does it connect to our reading this week?

These options can be assigned differentially and students can engage with them with more or less support from the teacher.

Routine:

Integrate/Collaborative Conversation

Provides students with an opportunity to communicate their big understanding of the unit. Inviting students to convey their own meaning allows for the student to make connections between their feelings, ideas, words and actions, and those of others.

Day 5

Collaborative Discussion (Growing the Concept/Understanding)
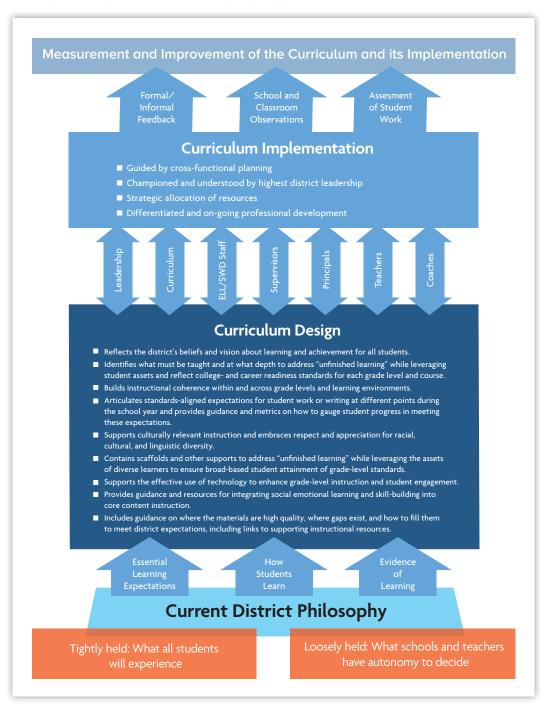
Discuss Weekly EQ of the Week and the Big Idea EQ of the Unit in connection to the reading, discussions, and writing that has taken place. Consider capturing the conceptual meaning making and understanding that has been reached on a Tree Map.

This collaborative discussion happens after two days of work with the core text. This design cultivates background knowledge so that all students' can communicate the ideas that they have learned. The fact that this discussion is prior to students being asked to write means students can develop their thinking orally—a universally supportive design.

PART III:
RECOMMENDATIONS

As districts embark on the process of developing a high-quality curriculum aligned to college-and career-readiness standards, it is crucial to understand the broad context within which a curriculum functions. Figure 22 attempts to provide a holistic view of the interconnected nature of various steps in the process of defining, adopting, implementing, and sustaining the quality of a curriculum.

FIGURE 22.
Steps in the Development, Implementation, and Ongoing Support of a District Curriculum

Measurement and Improvement of the Curriculum and its Implementation

Formal/ Informal Feedback

School and Classroom Observations

Assesment of Student Work

Curriculum Implementation

- Guided by cross-functional planning
- Championed and understood by highest district leadership
- Strategic allocation of resources
- Differentiated and on-going professional development

Leadership | Curriculum | ELL/SWD Staff | Supervisors | Principals | Teachers | Coaches

Curriculum Design

- Reflects the district's beliefs and vision about learning and achievement for all students.
- Identifies what must be taught and at what depth to address "unfinished learning" while leveraging student assets and reflect college- and career readiness standards for each grade level and course.
- Builds instructional coherence within and across grade levels and learning environments.
- Articulates standards-aligned expectations for student work or writing at different points during the school year and provides guidance and metrics on how to gauge student progress in meeting these expectations.
- Supports culturally relevant instruction and embraces respect and appreciation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity.
- Contains scaffolds and other supports to address "unfinished learning" while leveraging the assets of diverse learners to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards.
- Supports the effective use of technology to enhance grade-level instruction and student engagement.
- Provides guidance and resources for integrating social emotional learning and skill-building into core content instruction.
- Includes guidance on where the materials are high quality, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations, including links to supporting instructional resources.

Essential Learning Expectations

How Students Learn

Evidence of Learning

Current District Philosophy

Tightly held: What all students will experience

Loosely held: What schools and teachers have autonomy to decide

To begin with, a district's curriculum should be built on its philosophy about the essential learning expectations it holds for all students, as well as how students learn and how this learning should be monitored and measured. Of course, central to this instructional philosophy, or theory of action for how a district intends to advance student achievement and college and career readiness, are decisions the system has made regarding what instructional oversight it retains at the district level (i.e., what it holds "tightly"), and what decisions it allows to be made at the school or classroom level (i.e., what it holds "loosely"). While there is a natural tension between these two forces of centralization and school-based management, most districts find themselves somewhere in the middle of this management continuum. Even in a highly centralized school system, schools often have their own approaches and learning philosophies. Nonetheless, there are certain essential features that, regardless of school-to-school differences, should serve as a unifying foundation. Learning standards and expectations, for instance, should not vary by school, even if other things do. This provides equity in terms of student learning goals no matter where a student attends school, and no matter how frequently students transfer from school to school.

This set of decisions and beliefs that form the foundation for a district curriculum also determines many of the elements that a curriculum must contain, which can be seen listed in the middle box in the diagram. In addition to the central objective of supporting teachers and administrators, ensuring equity of access, and preparing students for college and careers, a strong curriculum must clarify what instructional decisions it holds tightly and loosely and what learning is essential and why. The most effective theory of action is based on an honest assessment of district needs given the level of student and staff performance. Autonomy should never mean that schools are released from ensuring that all students and student groups meet the learning expected at each grade level and course. Moreover, a curriculum must make a district's learning philosophy concrete by articulating what is central to district instructional work within viable timelines, as well as building a shared understanding of the learning that is to happen within and across grade levels. It is this set of features and criteria that make it a "curriculum" and not just a textbook series—a key distinction that means all the difference between sending out boxes of materials and providing teachers and administrators with meaningful guidance.

Of course, a district's work is far from over once it has developed a curriculum—even one that meets all of these criteria. Implementation is key, and requires focused collaboration and calibration on the part of all district staff. This implementation process needs to begin "at the top"—with the endorsement and support of a district's school board and superintendent. From there, the implementation process should be guided by cross-functional planning, including a diverse set of district instructional leaders, school supervisors, principals, and teachers, and resources should be strategically allocated based on district priorities. Professional development is an essential component of implementation, and the successful roll-out of any curriculum will therefore depend on high-quality, ongoing professional learning

opportunities based on district data and targeted to address the role-specific professional learning needs of teachers, aides, and administrators to improve curriculum implementation. For example, principals and supervisors do not need the depth of content and instructional knowledge that teachers do, but they need to understand what key focus areas are, why they are critical, and what that learning looks like. Moreover, there needs to be alignment between what the observers are looking for in classrooms and the measures for gauging the progress students are making at various points of the year. This will enable them to provide high-quality feedback to teachers during curriculum implementation. Districts can refer to the Council's publication, [Advancing Instruction and Leadership in the Nation's Great City Schools: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining High-Quality Professional Development](), for additional information.

Finally, the diagram shows that, through formal and informal feedback mechanisms, monitoring of implementation in all schools and classrooms, and assessment of student work and progress, the district should continuously work to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with integrity and access to rigorous content and high-quality instruction for all students.

Based on this illustration, the following recommendations are grouped into three main categories essential to the process of developing and rolling out a high-quality curriculum aligned to college- and career-readiness standards: planning, implementation, and measurement/improvement. The recommendations in the planning section provide some examples of what a district needs to think about and address in developing curriculum, while the implementation section provides guidance for ensuring that the curriculum is understood and used effectively systemwide. Finally, the measurement/improvement section provides advice and steps to ensure that the curriculum is continuously refined and improved, and that the district is gauging effectiveness based on clear measures of student achievement and growth.

Planning

- Examine the curriculum to ensure that it can be taught and learned within the actual time available during the school year. Given school calendar constraints, benchmark, and summative assessments, consider the time required for elevating student learning experiences.

- Analyze student achievement data and student work samples to identify areas of strength and weakness, gaps in performance, as well as extended learning opportunities to provide additional guidance in curricular documents.

- Determine the level of experience and current knowledge of content and pedagogy of teachers across the district in order to provide targeted support and preparation.

- Based on the analysis above, determine the grain size for the district's curriculum guidance. There are two types of considerations: the level of detail needed to explain the meaning of district expectations and whether the curriculum will provide guidance on what must be taught within specific time frames (day, week, quarter, semester).

- Ensure ease of use of curricular documents so that teachers do not have to consult multiple sources for guidance on what to teach and best approaches for supporting the development of particular concepts or skills.

- Determine how best to store and disseminate the curriculum. This includes using feedback obtained from hosting focus groups to collect input on ease of use and accessibility of sample curricular documents, as well as the most effective way for users to access the curriculum.

- Carefully vet and select instructional materials that will be used to support implementation of the curriculum using tools such as the Grade-level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool, Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners, Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners, and Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures.

- Carefully vet and select supplemental materials, programs, and interventions, including materials that leverage the assets of diverse learners. Ensure that these materials are high quality, culturally and linguistically relevant, and aligned to college-and career-readiness standards.

- Articulate how college-and career-readiness standards should be connected and applied across subject areas.

Implementation

- Enlist the superintendent and other district- and school-based leaders to help champion the curriculum and underscore the district's expectation that the curriculum will be implemented with integrity in all classrooms. Ensure that these key leaders understand the importance of the curriculum and how it is based on the district's philosophy about what is essential for students to learn, how they learn best, and how their learning will be measured.

- Create content-based professional development systems that address the cadence or routines of teaching and provide support to teachers in making effective instructional decisions. Ensure the strategic placement of professional development days throughout the school year and employ existing resources and structures (such as professional learning communities, common planning time, and coaches) in order to deliver effective training.

- Analyze student performance data and the demands of the curriculum to determine instructional priorities and the content-level demands that will require additional professional development.

- Use a data analysis and cross-functional planning team for prioritizing curriculum concepts, content, and skills to provide sufficient lead time for areas of focus.

- Based on the resources of time and personnel, prioritize short- and long-term professional development goals differentiated for teachers and administrators based on their respective roles in supporting teaching and learning, as well as curriculum implementation.

- Based on an analysis of teacher and student performance data, develop a systematic plan for supporting high-needs schools that supports teachers in providing rigorous standards-based instruction with implementation of the curriculum.

- Ensure new teachers and administrators receive the just-in-time professional development they need to support implementation of the curriculum and other district instructional initiatives already underway.

- Ensure that district professional development provides all teachers with the skills necessary to meet the needs of special student groups, such as English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students, so all students have access to high-quality instructional standards and expectations.

- Provide guidance and training to teachers and administrators on the selection or development of instructional materials (including digital tools) that are culturally and linguistically relevant and aligned to college-and career-readiness standards.

- Provide guidance and support to schools and teachers in the selection and use of supplemental materials, programs, and interventions for students that leverage diverse and complex text and ideas that also creates affirming learning environments for diverse learners who are struggling to meet rigorous grade-level standards.

- Monitor what instructional materials and digital resources are being used in schools to implement the district curriculum, and the effectiveness of these materials with various student groups.

Measurement and Improvement

- Regularly reach out to teachers and administrators, as well as across departments, to gauge the quality and alignment of the curriculum and its usefulness to end users in supporting student achievement. This can take multiple forms, from regular meetings with users to focus groups, surveys, virtual coaching, and online feedback forums.

- Define a process for refining and improving curriculum based on the feedback collected from teachers and administrators as well as student achievement and student work data.

- Clearly communicate all changes to the curriculum to teachers, administrators, and staff, acknowledging the role of data and feedback in these revisions.

- Provide teachers and administrators with guidance on what to look for in student work, what to look for during instructional rounds and classroom observations, and how to assess student learning to provide evidence that assignments and student work are aligned to grade-specific instructional expectations articulated in the curriculum.

- Compile annotated exemplars of student work in order to provide explicit guidance on what students are expected to learn and produce at each grade level, as well as next steps in addressing unfinished learning.

- Assess the impact of coaching and professional development in improving instructional practice and increasing college-and career-readiness levels.

- Ensure that inequities do not exist for student access to digital resources and the allocation of multi-media and technology tools that are used to support and enhance the quality of curriculum implementation.

STUDY GUIDE

PART ①
Purpose, Principles, and Preconditions

Defining Curriculum

1. What principles provide the foundation for your district's curriculum?
2. How does your district curriculum differ from a listing of standards or from the adopted textbooks or required classroom resources? Do staff understand those differences?
3. What steps are you taking to more clearly articulate and communicate your district's vision for the role of its curriculum?

The Purpose of a Quality Curriculum

4. How do you ensure consistency in instructional standards and expectations across schools?
5. To what extent is the work of teachers and school-based administrators guided by your district curriculum? How do you know?

Preconditions for Supporting a High-Quality Curriculum

6. As you think about your own district, which preconditions for supporting a high-quality curriculum are present, and which preconditions could be strengthened?
7. Consider data about the level of student performance and the stability and expertise of teachers, administrators, and other instructional staff in your district. In light of those factors, how does your district curriculum offer the level of guidance that instructional staff require for all students to access and meet the standards?

Principles for Design and Implementation

8. As you read the principles for design and implementation of a high-quality curriculum, which items does your district's curriculum do well?
9. What areas do you see for improvement?

PART ②
Principles for Design and Implementation: The Nine Key Features

10. Examine each of the nine key features in Part II. How well does your curriculum:

   a. Reflect the district's beliefs and vision about student learning and achievement?

   b. Clarify what must be taught and at what depth?

   c. Illustrate instructional coherence within and across grade levels?

   d. Provide explicit articulation of standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points of the school year?

   e. Support culturally-relevant instruction and embrace respect and appreciation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity?

   f. Include scaffolds that address unfinished learning while leveraging the assets of diverse learners to ensure broad-based student attainment of grade-level standards?

   g. Support the effective use of technology to enhance grade-level instruction and student engagement?

   h. Provide guidance and resources for integrating social emotional learning and skill-building into core content instruction?

   i. Cite links to classroom materials indicating where they are strong, where gaps exist, and how to fill them to meet district expectations?

A Deeper Look at Key Feature 2

11. As you examine Key Feature 2, how would you summarize why it is important for the district's curriculum documents to be clear about what must be taught and at what depth to reflect college-and-career readiness standards for each grade level and course?

12. Carefully examine the sample grade four English language arts unit overview (Figure 3) provided on page 20. Pay particular attention to the level of detail used to explain what the grade-level expectations are for the grade four standard: *Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.*

   a. In Figure 3, where would a teacher or supervisor find in the curriculum exactly what students need to know about first- and third-person narration?

COUNTEREXAMPLE: Now contrast the level of detail in Figure 3 to the following counterexample (Figure 23). This counterexample is typical of what teachers often receive in districts across the country. In this district, teachers in grade six receive a curriculum map and are expected to create their own approach to a set of standards while addressing essential questions per quarter. Figure 23 only displays the first unit of the quarter.

FIGURE 23. Counterexample for Key Feature 2:
Sample Grade Six Curriculum Map for Quarter 1

Unifying Concepts	Essential Questions	Reading Complex Texts & Texts to Support Writing; 3-5 shorts texts; 1 extended text per quarter; Balance between literary and informational texts	Performance Assessments
Q1 **Unifying Concept** Identity through culture	**Q1 UNIT 1** How do cultural experiences influence who we are? How do authors convey meaning through words and/or images?	**Q1 UNIT 1** **Extended Text** (autobiography and fiction; see Sixth Grade Unit Plan for how these texts are used in book clubs) *The Circuit* by Francisco Jimenez *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman *Holes* by Louis Sachar **Short Texts** (informational and editorial) "Evolution of a Point Guard" by Howard Beck, *New York Times* "I've Got Your Number" by Robe Imbriano, *New York Times* "Hip-Hop at the Museum?" by Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis, *Toolkit Texts* "Marriage — or Else" by Rod Nordland & Alissa J. Rubin, *Junior Scholastic* Negotiating Asian-American Identity through Portraiture" posted by Saskla DeMelker, PBS Newshour (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/blog/2011/10/negotiating-asian-american-identity-through-portraiture.html) "Eisenhower to Ngo Dinh Diem" (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/psources/ps_eisenhower.html)	Beginning of Year (BOY): RI.6.1 and W.9 Performance Task (reading and writing about text with evidence) for Pre-Assessment*+ **Q1 UNIT 1** Teacher-created performance assessment Focus on inform and explain Primary Standards Assessed: RI.6.1, RI.6.7; RI.6.10; W.6.2

> Where is the guidance for making connections among the unifying concept, standards, and the texts?

> How will the teachers in every school know if they have correctly interpreted the content students should know and the depth of understanding the district expects for all students.

    b. What else do students need to be able to do in order to show that they can determine an author's point of view, according to Figure 3?

13. Look at a sample from your own district's curriculum. Is the level of detail closer to the example in Figure 3 or to the counterexample in Figure 23?

14. What evidence would indicate whether the curriculum support has been sufficient for teachers to understand district expectations for what they need to teach and at what depth?

A Deeper Look at Key Feature 3

15. As you examine Key Feature 3, which addresses building instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college-and career-readiness standards for each grade, pay particular attention to the Algebra 1 section provided on pages 33-34 (Figure 6). Notice how explicitly the district provides teachers with guidance regarding prior student learning about the concepts the current lesson will address. How else does the curriculum guidance in Figure 6 build coherence so that students can make connections in their learning?

COUNTEREXAMPLE: Now contrast the level of detail in Figure 6 to the following counterexample (Figure 24). Too many districts only provide teachers with this level of guidance—a set of standards divided into each quarter. In this sample, the district appears to treat the grade three content as a set of disjointed standards, without any consideration of the inherent connections between standards.

FIGURE 24. Counterexample for Key Feature 2:
Sample Grade Six Curriculum Map for Quarter 1

First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
Use place value understanding to round to the nearest 10 or 100 Fluently add or subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on	Identify arithmetic patterns (including patterns in the addition table or multiplication table) and explain them using properties of operations.	Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b.	Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving perimeters of polygons, including finding the perimeter given the side lengths, finding an unknown

place value, properties of operations, and/ or the relationship between addition and subtraction.

Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.

Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 5 x 7 as the total number of objects in 5 groups of 7 objects each.

Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations, involving equal groups, arrays and measurement quantities.

Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.

Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10-90 (e.g., 9 x 80, 5x 60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.

Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities.

Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.

Interpret wholenumber quotients of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 56÷8 as the number of objects in each share when 56 objects are partitioned equally into 8 shares, or as a number of shares when 56 objects are partitioned into equal shares of 8 objects each.

Determine the unknown whole number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers. For example, determine the unknown number that makes the equation true in each of the equations 8 x_? = 48, 5 = ? ÷ 3 and 6 x 6 = ?

Represent a fraction 1/b on a number line diagram by defining the interval from 0 to 1 as the whole partitioning into b equal parts.

Represent a fraction a/b on a number line diagram by marking off a lengths 1/b from 0. Recognize that the resulting interval has size a/b and that its endpoint locates the number a/b on the number line.

Recognize that each part has size 1/b and that the endpoint of the part based at 0 locates the number 1/b on the number line.

Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays and measurement quantities, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

Understand a fraction as a number on the number line; represent fractions on a number line diagram.

Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving perimeters of polygons, including finding the perimeter given the side lengths, finding an unknown side length and exhibiting rectangles with the same perimeter and different areas or with the same area and different perimeters.

Recognize area as an attribute of plane figures and understand concepts of area measurement. A plane figure which can be covered without gaps or overlaps by n unit squares is said to have an area of n square units. A square with side length 1 unit, called "a square unit," is said to have "one square unit" of area, and can be used to measure area.

Measure areas by counting unit squares.

Relate area to the operations of multiplication and division. Find the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths by tiling it, and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths.

Multiply side lengths to find areas of rectangles with whole-number side lengths in the context of solving real world and mathematical problems, and represent whole-number products as rectangular areas in mathematical reasoning.

Use tiling to show in a concrete case that the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths a and b+c is the sum of a x b and a x c. Use area models to represent the distributive property in mathematical reasoning.

			lengths in the context of solving real world and mathematical problems, and represent whole-number products as rectangular areas in mathematical reasoning.

Use tiling to show in a concrete case that the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths a and b+c is the sum of a x b and a x c. Use area models to represent the distributive property in mathematical reasoning.

Recognize area as additive. Find areas of rectilinear figures by decomposing them into non-overlapping rectangles and adding the areas of non-overlapping parts, applying this technique to solve real-world problems.

Partition shapes into parts with equal areas. Express the area of each part as a fraction of the whole. |

16. Looking at the number and type of expectations in each quarter, how well do you think the district has spaced out learning objectives, and how realistic is this timeline?

17. As you examine the four quarters, how are teachers expected to make connections for students within the grade level?

18. Are teachers provided with sufficient guidance and data on the the background students have had in previous years on a given concept or skill?

19. As you examine your district's curriculum, what have you used to ensure that concepts and skills are built in a logical manner? For example, in mathematics, have you used sources such as the Progression Documents from Illustrative Mathematics? (See example at https://www.cgcs.org/domain/120).

PART ❸
Guiding Questions for Recommendations

20. Think about the diagram provided on page 90 (Figure 22). Which sections are ones that you feel are strong areas within your school district?

21. Which areas could be the focus of next steps for improving your district's curriculum, strengthening its implementation, or evaluating its effectiveness? To leverage your work, prioritize what you can do well with the staff and budget available. Take into consideration where student achievement data and student work samples reveal the greatest needs and the content area concepts and skills where teachers need the greatest support.

Planning

22. As you begin making revisions to your current curriculum, consider the following action steps:

    a. How will you ensure that the district curriculum can be taught and learned within the actual time available during the school year?

    b. How can you optimize learning time to more accurately reflect the actual instructional time available during the school year i.e., district-wide summative and benchmark assessments, assembly programs, etc. ?

    c. How can you allow time for students to learn the grade-level standards as well as to leverage the assets of students who may have unfinished learning?

23. Given the level of student achievement and the expertise of your teachers and instructional support personnel, what is the appropriate grain size for the curriculum guidance you need to provide?

24. As you analyze your student achievement data and student work, as well as feedback from teachers about curriculum implementation, how can you provide additional guidance to address areas of weakness and known gaps in student performance? How can this be done without inadvertently creating a document that lacks coherence or is not in service of grade-level learning during Tier 1 instruction?

25. In writing curriculum guidance, how will you act on the feedback and support you receive from other central office departments, teachers, principal supervisors and specialized offices, such as English language learners and students with disabilities?

26. What is the process for incorporating and responding to feedback about the ease of use and accessibility of current curriculum documents before beginning the revision process?

27. What is your process for ensuring that adopted materials and resources are culturally and linguistically relevant and aligned to the rigor of college-and career-readiness standards?

28. What tools did you employ (such as the Council of the Great City Schools' Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool—Quality Review, and English Language Development 2.0, EdReports, Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool) to determine the alignment of the materials?

Implementation

29. How will you enlist the superintendent and other district and school-based leaders in championing the curriculum and underscoring the district's expectation that the curriculum be implemented with integrity in all classrooms? What support will be needed throughout the revision and implementation process? What are some of the budgetary implications and what impact will the budget have on curriculum revisions and implementation?

30. In considering district-led support for curriculum implementation,
    a. How will you design the district's professional development plan to address the knowledge and skills that teachers will need to implement the curriculum with integrity?
    b. How will you optimize existing structures to provide adequate time to address instructional priorities?
    c. What content-specific professional development is needed to enhance teacher's content knowledge as well as to address the cadence or routines of teaching so that teachers are able to make more effective instructional decisions?
    d. How will you clarify and communicate the rationale for specific areas in the curriculum based on the analysis of student performance data?
    e. How will you design professional development to help teachers leverage crossdisciplinary support?
    f. How will professional development incorporate the needs of special student groups, including gifted and talented students as well as students with unfinished learning?

Measurement and Improvement

31. How will you periodically collect feedback from teachers and administrators, as well as from across departments, to gauge the quality and alignment of the curriculum and its usability for end users? How will you clearly communicate revisions, in a timely manner, to teachers and administrators?

32. How will you know whether concepts specified in the curriculum are being taught at the appropriate level of depth? What guidance is provided so that teachers are able to assess the degree of student understanding relative to the cognitive demand of the standard?

33. What tools can be used during classroom observations and instructional rounds to provide feedback to teachers about the evidence of student learning as well as to explicitly identify assets and gaps in student understanding?

34. How can you incorporate exemplars of student work into the curriculum? Throughout the school year, how can you and your curriculum team begin compiling a bank of annotated exemplars of student work so that teachers and administrators have evidence of high-quality student work and how it should progress from the beginning to the end of the school year?

35. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development designed to improve teacher practice as well as content-specific knowledge? How can you ensure that all schools have access to the same quality professional development so that inequities do not exist?

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

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AURORA ACADEMIC REVIEW

Aurora Public School District

Academic Strategic Support Team Overview

Ray Hart and Robin Hall

January 2, 2024

Agenda

- **Overview**

- **Commendations**

- **Background**

- **Key Areas of Need**

- **Key Recommendations**

- **Questions and Answers**

Commendations

- Staff - "our system is primed to do the right work and teams are ready!"

- *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*

- Learning Walks using a common rubric*, Instructional Practice Guide*, to intentionally normalize instructional expectations

- Learning Community Directors and the surrounding community, are supportive and excited to work with the district

- Early Childhood Education

- The following includes findings and recommendations to prioritize the implementation of a high-quality core (Tier 1) instructional program to advance student achievement and equity
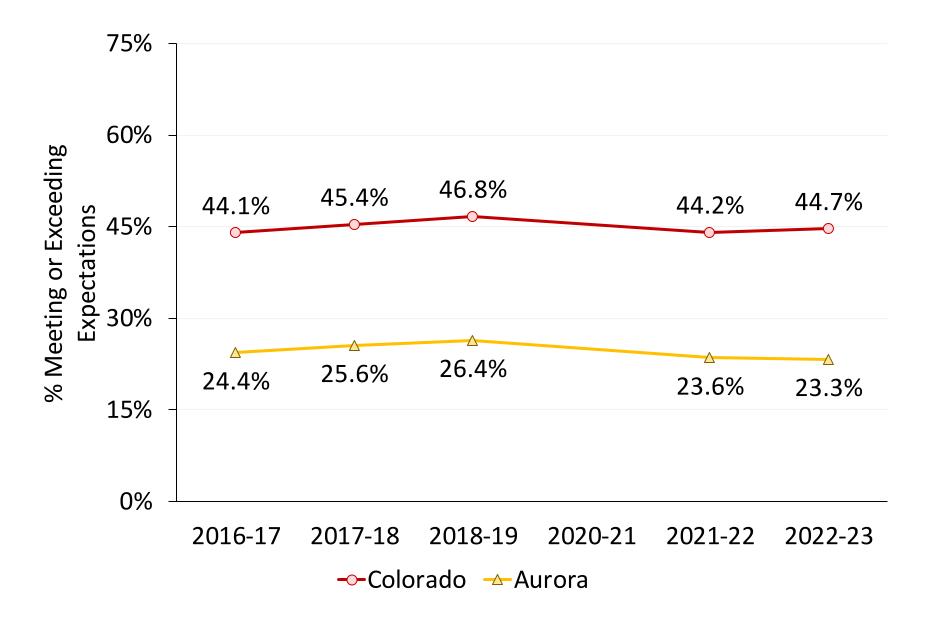
CMAS ELA RESULTS

Aurora vs. State of Colorado
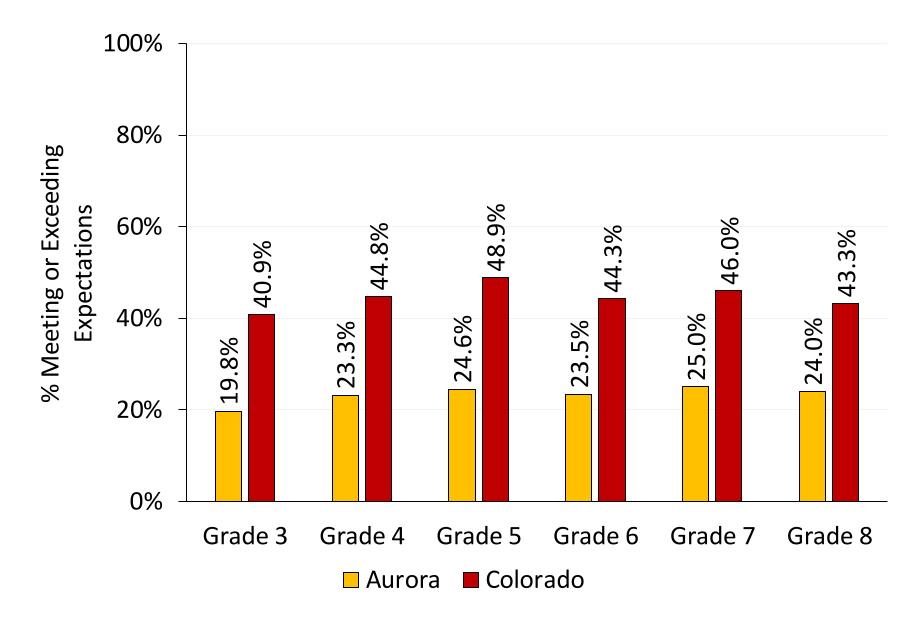
2017 – 2023

CMAS ELA
ALL STUDENTS
ALL GRADES
2016-17 THROUGH
2022-23*
AURORA VS.
COLORADO

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

Colorado: 44.1% (2016-17), 45.4% (2017-18), 46.8% (2018-19), 44.2% (2021-22), 44.7% (2022-23)

Aurora: 24.4% (2016-17), 25.6% (2017-18), 26.4% (2018-19), 23.6% (2021-22), 23.3% (2022-23)

○ Colorado △ Aurora

*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21
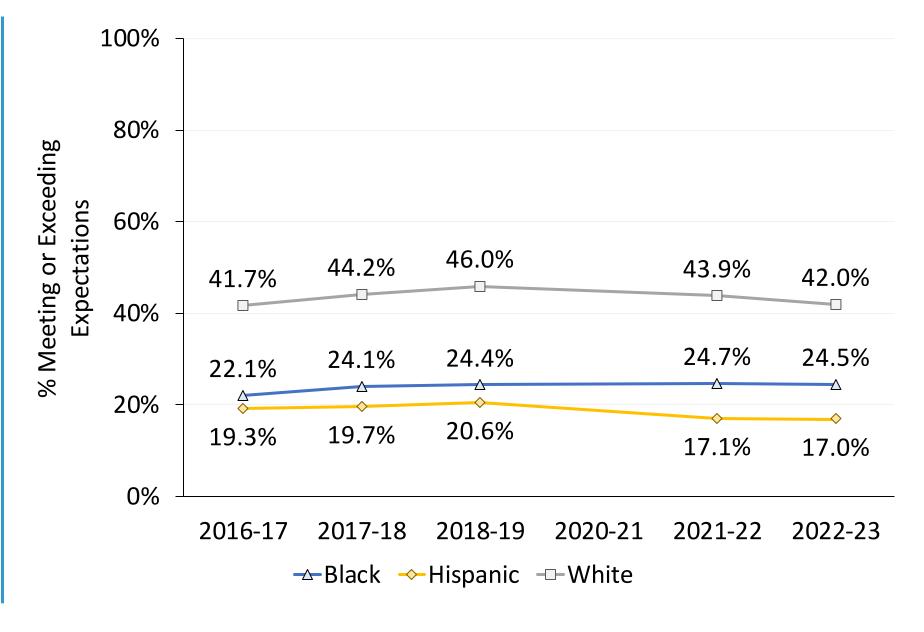
CMAS
ELA
All Students
All Grade
LEVELS
2022-23
AURORA VS.
COLORADO

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

	Aurora	Colorado
Grade 3	19.8%	40.9%
Grade 4	23.3%	44.8%
Grade 5	24.6%	48.9%
Grade 6	23.5%	44.3%
Grade 7	25.0%	46.0%
Grade 8	24.0%	43.3%

CMAS ELA
STUDENTS BY RACE
ALL GRADES
AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2016-17 THROUGH 2022-23*
AURORA VS. COLORADO

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

White: 41.7%, 44.2%, 46.0%, 43.9%, 42.0%
Black: 22.1%, 24.1%, 24.4%, 24.7%, 24.5%
Hispanic: 19.3%, 19.7%, 20.6%, 17.1%, 17.0%

2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23

Black — Hispanic — White
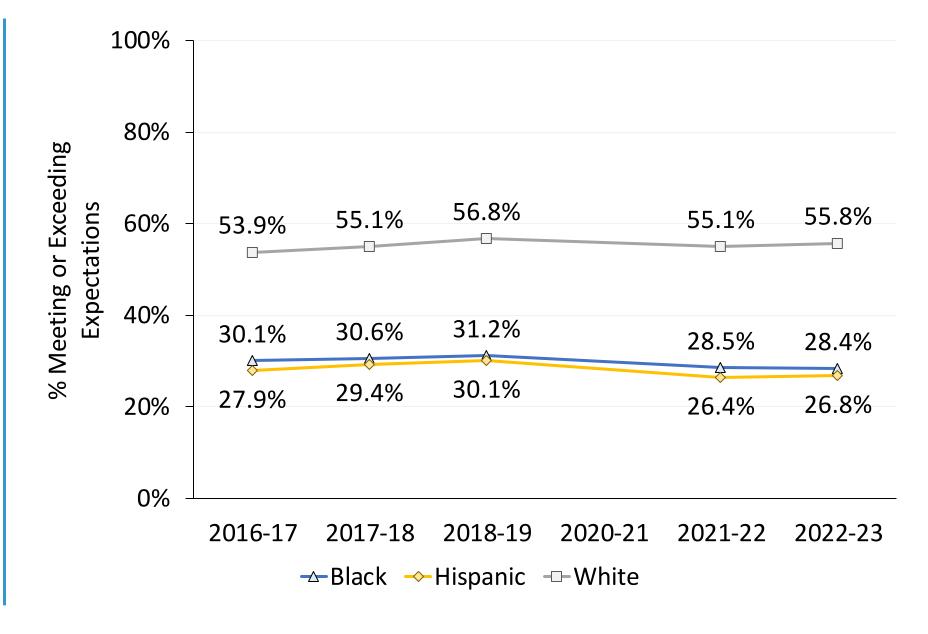
138

*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21

CMAS ELA
STUDENTS BY RACE
ALL GRADES
COLORADO
2016-17 THROUGH 2022-23*
AURORA VS. COLORADO

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

White: 53.9% (2016-17), 55.1% (2017-18), 56.8% (2018-19), 55.1% (2021-22), 55.8% (2022-23)

Black: 30.1% (2016-17), 30.6% (2017-18), 31.2% (2018-19), 28.5% (2021-22), 28.4% (2022-23)

Hispanic: 27.9% (2016-17), 29.4% (2017-18), 30.1% (2018-19), 26.4% (2021-22), 26.8% (2022-23)

△ Black   ◇ Hispanic   □ White

139
*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21
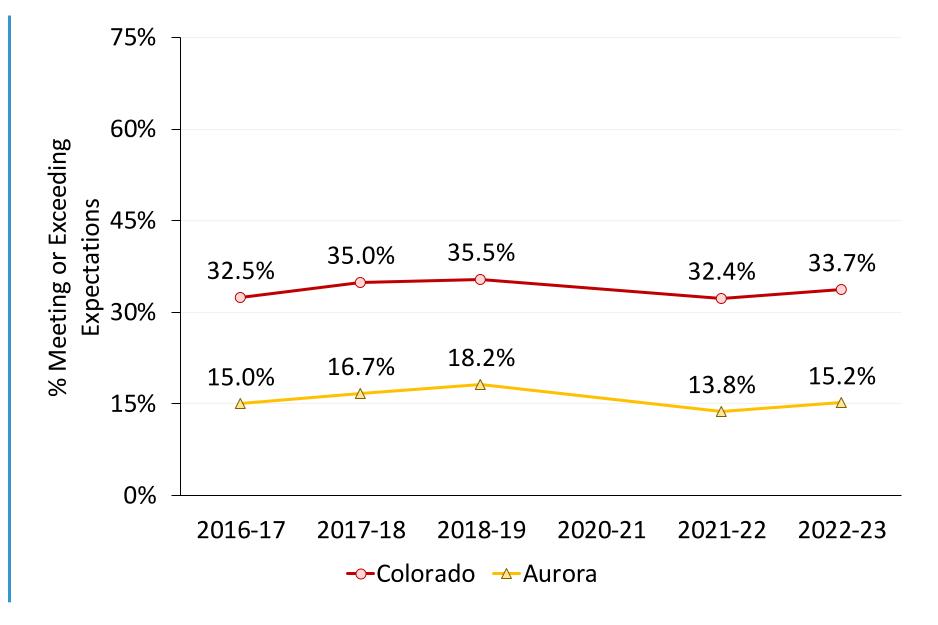
CMAS MATH RESULTS

Aurora vs. State of Colorado

2017 – 2023
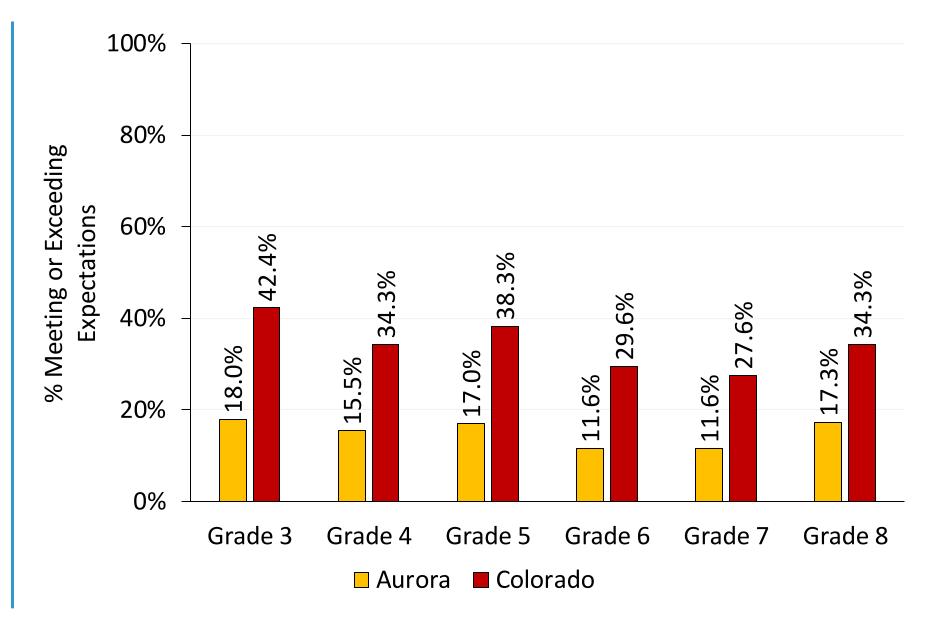
CMAS
Math
All Students
All Grades
2016-17 through
2022-23*
Aurora vs.
Colorado

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

32.5% 35.0% 35.5% 32.4% 33.7%

15.0% 16.7% 18.2% 13.8% 15.2%

2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2020-21 2021-22 2022-23

Colorado   Aurora

*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21
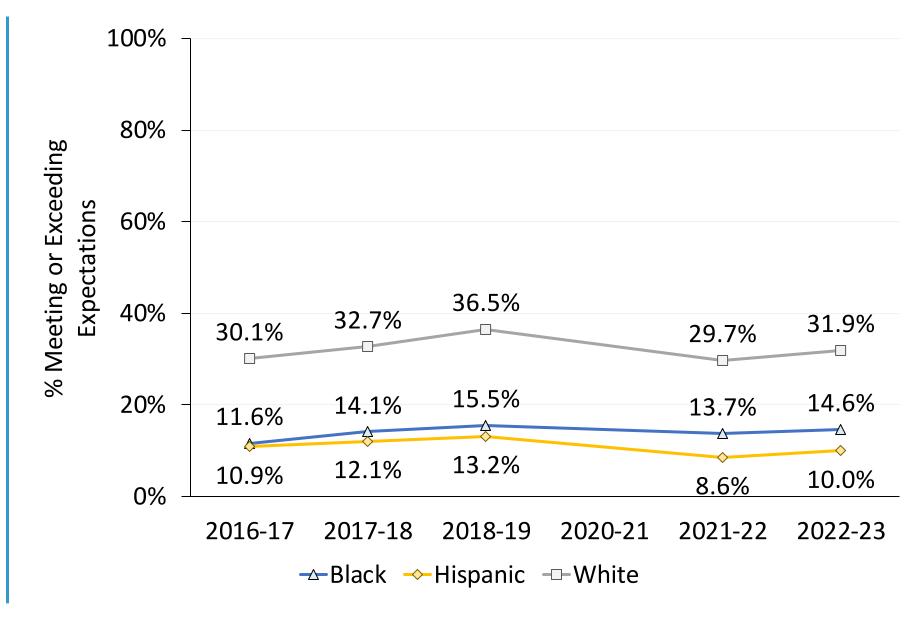
CMAS
Math
2022-23 By Grade Level Aurora vs. Colorado
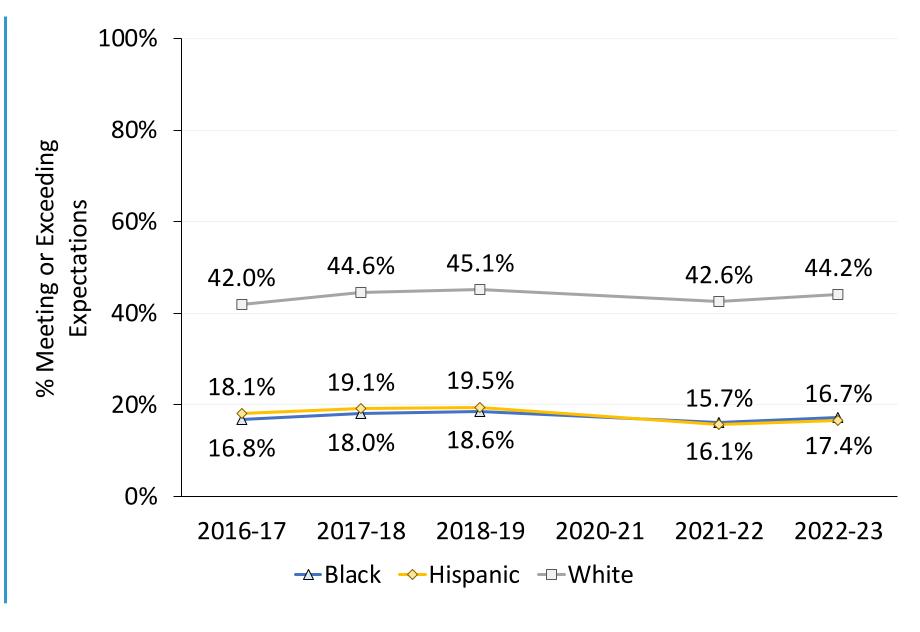
% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

Grade	Aurora	Colorado
Grade 3	18.0%	42.4%
Grade 4	15.5%	34.3%
Grade 5	17.0%	38.3%
Grade 6	11.6%	29.6%
Grade 7	11.6%	27.6%
Grade 8	17.3%	34.3%

Aurora   Colorado

CMAS
MATH
STUDENTS BY RACE
ALL GRADES
AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2016-17 THROUGH 2022-23*

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
White	30.1%	32.7%	36.5%		29.7%	31.9%
Black	11.6%	14.1%	15.5%		13.7%	14.6%
Hispanic	10.9%	12.1%	13.2%		8.6%	10.0%

Black — Hispanic — White

*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21

CMAS
MATH
STUDENTS BY RACE
ALL GRADES
COLORADO
2016-17 THROUGH 2022-23*

% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
White	42.0%	44.6%	45.1%		42.6%	44.2%
Hispanic	18.1%	19.1%	19.5%		15.7%	16.7%
Black	16.8%	18.0%	18.6%		16.1%	17.4%

△ Black ◇ Hispanic ☐ White

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*Low participation rates affected reporting of data in 2020-21

Key Areas of Need

➢ There is a lack of organizational coherence and communication, with a **default to siloed work**.

➢ School choice seems to have been a focus at the district level with a need to "get back down to the teacher level" (**no teacher cabinet/advisory group, teachers are not part of Learning Walks**). Teachers shared that they do not respond to surveys because **there is no evidence of their voices being heard** and expressed the perception that they do not matter.

➢ The **separation of the Assessment and Accountability departments** has led to the inability to make data-driven decisions.

➢ **Curriculum** is defined as the **products you buy**. **Instructional frameworks** are not yet in place and there is minimal guidance, documents, or PD available to practitioners.

Key Areas of Need

➤ The team heard that many staff do not have **content knowledge/professional development support**, report to different departments, have **no communication protocols**, do not have differentiated assignments, or do not have **knowledge of how to use data effectively**.

➤ Special Education: There was no **comprehensive document** describing the referral and identification processes across the district, no monitoring of eligibility criteria and practices for years, and **little integration of special education teachers** into the general education environment.

➤ There is a visible movement to **reign in autonomous curriculum and instructional materials**, but there is still a **lingering mindset of autonomy**.

Key Areas of Need

➢Principals reported:

   a) **No alignment** regarding how to support schools.

   b) The **'why' is not shared** (i.e., data) or why principals have to do what they do.

   c) **Expectations are clear but not the 'path' on how to get there**.

   d) **Unpacking standards is not structured**.

   e) Principals identified a **disconnect between learning directors**.

   f) Teaching partners are **generalists**.

Key Areas of Need

➢ Divisions and departments are **working with purpose but are not working together**.

➢ Teachers and administrators are **open to change** but the **lack of collaborative two-way communication has led to confusion and misdirection.**

➢ Board of Education:

    a) There seems to be a **level of distrust among Board members and the superintendent** (past and now a concern for the new superintendent).

    b) The Board has also **made claims of unfairness and distrust the data that has been presented**.

Key Areas of Need

➢ There is a **lack of clear Tier 1 expectations for student groups**, especially in special education settings and for English learners.

➢ There are **varying degrees of understanding of the essential components of MTSS** among leaders**.**

➢ There is a district preference for **agnostic, rather than content-specific knowledge and pedagogies**, evidenced in both the professional learning/training offerings and the assignment of teaching partners and instructional coordinators as "generalists."

Recommendations

➢ **These recommendations are specific to the identified foundational high priority needs to:**

- ▪ **Create organizational coherence,**

- ▪ **Build trust and a collaborative mindset,**

- ▪ **Accelerate the district's efforts to provide equity in learning,**

- ▪ **Design and implement standards-based, rigorous curriculum,**

- ▪ **Enhance instructional delivery and build teacher capacity, and**

- ▪ **Increase student achievement and well-being.**

Recommendations - Coherence

➢ Critically **examine structures (divisions and departments) to ensure the role of each is aligned to the district initiatives** and eliminate duplication.

➢ Create a cross-functional team (including principal and teacher representation) led by the Chief Academic Officer to develop a specific, explicit, **sequential Theory of Action.**

➢ Systematically and frequently **communicate to all stakeholders WHY** (the rationale) these initiatives were identified (i.e., based on data) and the desired results.

➢ Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, create a team of senior leaders, principals, and teaching partners/teachers, including those who work with special populations (e.g., multilingual learners) and the MTSS department, to review and **revise the current instructional framework and identify what classroom scaffolds within Tier 1 instruction should look like across schools and content areas.**

Recommendations

➢ Review, restructure, and enhance the current effort to develop content area curriculum documents. Transition from vendor-created or external documents to building capacity within the district for curriculum excellence and expertise. The **new curriculum documents should define what Tier 1 high-quality, rigorous, standards-based English language arts and math instruction look like** and what they do not look like at each grade.

➢ Ensure the **district's content area specialists, especially in reading and math, are experts in their fields**. Provide intensive professional development to upgrade their skills and expertise.

➢ **Anchor the curriculum guides in rigorous standards** rather than the scope and sequence of the adopted textbooks.

Recommendations

➢ **Adopt a districtwide data management/platform system** that supports monitoring student progress, data sharing and analysis, program evaluation, and links to the district's MTSS.

➢ **Standardize assessment practices across learning communities** to determine systemwide more accurately if students are on track to meet grade-level expectations.

➢ **Create a multi-year professional learning plan/calendar** for teachers and leaders differentiated based on experience and need.

➢ **Use data from the learning walks, interim, and summative student assessments** to guide and prioritize the development of professional learning.

Recommendations

➢ **Focus on unpacking standards, creating rigorous tasks aligned to the standards**, and addressing misconceptions when designing professional learning. Teachers need content expertise to support their instructional delivery.

➢ **Provide special education and general education teachers collaborative professional learning** to strengthen inclusion and co-teaching practices.

➢ **Articulate a definition of the district's MTSS** that is shared with all academic departments, LCDs, deans, and principals. The emphasis should be on strong Tier 1 instructional and behavioral systems and ensuring that interventions relate back to Tier 1 instruction

➢ Create a comprehensive document describing the **referral and identification processes for special education and gifted and talented services**.

Recommendations

➢ **Go slow to go fast**: balance urgency with diligence and quality.

➢ **Explain the "why"**: communicate the rationale (cite data) and how the change will address the problem and impact staff and students.

➢ **Be intentional about strategic abandonment**: when everything is important, nothing is important.

➢ **Practice empathy**: elevate "teacher voice" and be open to feedback.

➢ **Trust the process**: prepare for push-back and leverage the stages of change management.

➢ **Follow your North Star**: align your decisions and actions to the district's mission and vision.

➢ **Celebrate the small wins**: successive small wins lead to greater accomplishments!

Thank You
Questions and Answers

Academic Review of Teaching and Learning
Aurora Public Schools

October 2023

The Aurora Public Schools (APS) Board of Education, under the direction of President Debra Gerkin, requested that the Council of Great City Schools conduct a high-level review and evaluation of the district's academic program and recommend changes that would align and enhance a rigorous teaching and learning program with expectations and support for all students. The review of the district's academic program, conducted in April 2023, focused on:

- High-quality core instruction (curriculum implementation and impact),
- Targeted and intensive supplemental instruction and differentiation,
- Assessment systems to measure student outcomes, and
- Professional learning for teachers and administrators.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team (SST) comprised of senior executives with extensive experience in academics and curriculum and instruction from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Appendix A provides brief biographical sketches of the team members).

Robin Hall
Chief of Schools/Director of Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools (Washington, D.C.)

Cathy Martin
Associate Chief of Academics (Retired)
Denver Public Schools (Colorado)

Jermaine Dawson
Deputy Superintendent
Philadelphia Public Schools (Pennsylvania)

Pamela Seki
Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development (Retired)
Long Beach Unified School District (California)

Diane Quisenberry
Independent Consultant
Columbus, Ohio

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the review team. The following is a summary of what the Council team observed during interviews with district leadership, specialists, teachers, Board of Education directors, other stakeholders, and our review of data and materials. The report is divided into two sections: Findings (areas of strength and need) and Recommendations and Next Steps. Within the scope of the report, the academic program areas addressed include:

- Organization (organizational structure, coherence, leadership),
- Curriculum and Instruction,
- Assessment,
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS),
- Professional Development, and
- Special Populations.

Current Environment

The Council team met with the interim Superintendent of the Aurora Public Schools to understand the expectations and intent of the peer review. At the time of the review, the Board of Education was engaged in a comprehensive search process to identify a new Superintendent. Subsequently, the district selected Michael Giles, Jr. as the new Superintendent. Mr. Giles has recently assumed the role of Superintendent. There is acknowledgement across the system that churn in leadership positions with unconnected and changing aims and initiatives has created the need for an intentional and coherent change management process. The current challenge and imperative to deploy an effective change management process to guide the district through both organizational and cultural change will determine the district's successes (or failures) for years to come. It is important to create a roadmap to academic success that involves establishing a clear vision, mission, and theory of action that will guide the work of central office, principals, and teachers in support of student outcomes with clarity about evidence of success.

The team observed that there is currently an intentional focus on equity in instruction across the district and creating support structures that will advance student performance across all populations. District leaders recognize that the extent of instructional autonomy at the school level should not compete with shared expectations for common curricula and pedagogy. Pulling back the past practice of autonomous schools in service of equity and common expectations is priming the system for opportunities to advance a new instructional framework and curricular documents; both projects have been identified as priorities by the district. Signaling a laser focus on core Tier 1 instruction, the district implemented Learning Walks that will be foundational to the conversations leaders are engaging in to envision explicit strategies and content that are to be expected in every APS classroom.

To conduct its work, the SST reviewed documents, analyzed available data, and conducted on-site interviews with staff members.[1] In addition, the team studied the district's instructional

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[1] The Council's reports are based on interviews with district staff and others, a review of documents, observations of

programs with a focus on special populations (e.g., English learners, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students). The Council team assembled their findings and observations and developed recommendations designed to assist the district with improving the academic program leading to desired student outcomes. (see Appendix B. Individuals Interviewed; Appendix C. Documents Reviewed; Appendix D. Working Agenda).

Aurora Public School District

The Aurora Public School District (APS), also known as the Adams-Arapahoe School District 28J, was established in 1885 when Mr. William Smith requested that the county establish a school district. He served on the board of education from 1885 to 1935, and the first record of the Arapahoe County District #28 dates to 1907. In 1962, school districts were reorganized. Aurora Public Schools was formed from Aurora, Altura, Clyde Miller, First Creek, Sable, and Tollgate Districts.[2] Today, APS is the fifth largest school district in the state of Colorado. APS currently serves a diverse enrollment of over 38,000 Kindergarten through twelfth grade students in 58 schools and centers, and the overall student enrollment is 56.4% Hispanic/Latino, 17.3% Black, 14.0% White, 5.8% Two or More Races, 4.9% Asian, and 1.6% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander/Native American or Alaska Native. Students are supported by more than 3,500 employees.[3]

The Board of Education sets policy that governs the Little Rock School District. The Board is made up of seven (7) members who are all elected at-large across the community with staggered election cycles. The Board is responsible for selecting and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent is responsible to the Board for efficiently operating the school system and managing the APS current expenditure budget of approximately $473 million for district-operated schools.[2] The Superintendent is also responsible for developing and implementing the APS Strategic Plan, *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*, in partnership with the Board of Education.

Academic Performance

Based on Colorado Performance Frameworks (see Exhibit 1) retrieved by the SST for analysis, APS was last fully Accredited (2nd highest level) in 2009. In 2010, the district was Accredited with Improvement Plan (Level 3) followed by five consecutive years of Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan status.[4] In 2017, the district improved to Accredited with Improvement Plan for six consecutive years earning 45.7 percentage points in 2022. In 2023, the district declined to 42.8

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operations, and professional judgment. The team conducting the interviews relies on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming, but the SST cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by interviewees.

[2] Source: A Brief History of the APS Board of Education. Retrieved from
https://www.aurorak12.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3217528&pageId=3743062.

[3] Quick Fact Sheet about APS. Retrieved from:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WsiZ8P49U5EPKFvkCU2NBZQyXnBqD3yssngTaL_StEc/preview.

[4] Important Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on educational instruction, state assessments were cancelled in Spring 2020 and state accountability was paused for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. State accountability resumed in 2022-2023 with 1-year transitional ratings and is now returning to normal with 1-year and multi-year (2-year) preliminary ratings for 2023-2024.

percentage points and dropped to Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan with Low Participation (below 95% test participation rates in two or more content areas).

Exhibit 1. Colorado Department of Education Performance Frameworks, 2017

DISTRICT ACCREDITATION RATINGS

- ACCREDITED WITH DISTINCTION
- ACCREDITED
- ACCREDITED WITH IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- ACCREDITED WITH PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- ACCREDITED WITH TURNAROUND PLAN
- INSUFFICIENT STATE DATA: SMALL TESTED POPULATION*
- INSUFFICIENT STATE DATA: LOW PARTICIPATION**

These Performance Framework ratings are based on several accountability measures including the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, graduation rates, and other measures. The following exhibits detail the district's performance on several of these measures compared to the state since the 2016-17 school year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, data for the 2020-21 school year are not reported when state spring assessments were suspended. Exhibit 2 illustrates the CMAS ELA performance from 2017 to 2023. The data indicate that the difference in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding ELA expectations between APS and Colorado has grown about two percentage points (1.7) since 2017 (19.7 percentage points in 2017, 19.8 percentage points in 2018, 20.4 percentage points in 2019, 20.6 percentage points in 2022, and 21.4 percentage points in 2023). The 1.7 percentage point increase indicates that the ELA gap between APS students and the state has grown slightly over time.

Exhibit 2. CMS English Language Arts Performance Across All Grades, 2017 through 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Exhibit 3 illustrates the CMAS Math performance from 2017 to 2023. The data indicate that the difference in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding Math expectations between APS and Colorado fluctuated across years (17.5 percentage points in 2017, 18.3 percentage points in 2018, 17.3 percentage points in 2019, 18.6 percentage points in 2022, and 18.5 percentage points in 2023). The relatively small, one percentage point, difference indicates that the Math gap between APS students and the state has been relatively consistent over time.

Exhibit 3. CMS Math Performance Across All Grades, 2017 through 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

The SST also analyzed the CMAS performance for APS compared to the state in ELA (Exhibit 4) and Math (Exhibit 5) by grade level for the 2021-22 assessment year. In both ELA and Math, the gaps between the district and the state are relatively consistent as well, and the pattern of increases and decreases across years mirrors the state pattern across grade levels.

Exhibit 4. CMS English Language Arts Performance By Grade Level, 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

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Exhibit 5. CMS Math Performance By Grade Level, 2023

Chart: % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by grade level

Grade	Aurora	Colorado
Grade 3	18.0%	42.4%
Grade 4	15.5%	34.3%
Grade 5	17.0%	38.3%
Grade 6	11.6%	29.6%
Grade 7	11.6%	27.6%
Grade 8	17.3%	34.3%

Source: Colorado Department of Education

The SST also analyzed performance for select student groups (Hispanic/Latino, African American, White, Low Income, Students with Disabilities, and English language learners) between 2017 and 2023 (see Appendix E). All groups have consistently performed below like student groups at the state. Similar to the overall student performance reported earlier, performance for each of the student groups is relatively consistent over time. One exception is African American students where the gap between Aurora and Colorado has closed in ELA and mathematics, 4.1 and 2.5 percentage points, respectively. In addition, African American students are slight above (0.2 percentage points) their pre-pandemic proficiency rates in English Language Arts. Students with disabilities are also slightly above their pre-pandemic proficiency rates in ELA (1.1 percentage points) and mathematics (0.4 percentage points).

Exhibit 6 shows the change in the Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate for APS compared to Colorado. In 2017, the graduation rate was lowest at 67.6%. Since that year, the graduation rate has generally remained at about 76%, except in 2020 when the rate peaked at 79%. The state graduation rate increased 2.3 percentage points between 2017 and 2022.

Exhibit 6. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2017 to 2022

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Overall, APS performance has remained consistent over the years. In 2022, the Board of Education adopted a set of Results desired for the district with Limitations identified based on the vision and values of the community. The Results and Limitations are identified below.

The APS Board's adopted Results are:

1. **Early Literacy**: The percentage of 3rd grade students in APS-operated schools who demonstrate grade level literacy skills based on CMAS English Language Arts/Literacy assessment will increase from 19.7% in August 2022 to 28.2% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
2. **High School Graduation Rate**: The percentage of APS students in APS-operated schools graduating in four years will increase from an internal estimate of 75.3% in 2022 (available January 2023) to 78% in 2025 (available January 2026) based on the new Colorado graduation requirements, which requires a demonstration of college and career readiness. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
3. **Equity**: The percentage of 6th grade Hispanic/Latinx and Black students in APS-operated schools who ARE on grade level in English/Language Arts/Literacy and Math, as measured by CMAS, will increase from 13% in August 2022 to 20% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
4. **Equity**: The percentage of 9th grade Black and Hispanic/Latinx students in APS-operated schools who ARE on grade level, as measured by PSAT, will increase from 15.8% in August 2022 to 22% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

The APS Board's adopted Limitations are:

- **Limitation 1**: The Superintendent may not allow implementation or adoption of any programming that does not prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 2:** The Superintendent may not allow the urgency of academic achievement to outweigh the needs of the whole child, including the need for art, music, physical

education, social emotional learning, and mental health support. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

- **Limitation 3**: The Superintendent may not propose major decisions to the board without first engaging students, parents, community, and staff.
(*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 4**: The Superintendent may neither cause nor allow district circumstances for current or prospective students, their parents/guardians, or community members that are unsafe, undignified, disrespectful, or unnecessarily intrusive or restrictive. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 5**: The Superintendent will not allow the retention rate of Black and Hispanic/Latino educators to be significantly below the retention rate of all educators in APS-operated schools. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

After meeting with Superintendent Giles and his team, the Council SST is confident that the staff, with the governance support of the school board, will be able to improve student outcomes. This report includes recommendations to prioritize the implementation of a high-quality core (Tier 1) instructional program to advance student achievement and equity. Staff interviewed expressed that they are looking forward to a new instructional vision for the district. This report is written to support the new instructional vision for the district by sharing findings, observations, and recommendations designed to assist the district with improving the academic program.

Project Findings and Observations

Areas of Strength

1. There is a new energy and focus on the district's mission and vision which has created opportunities to build coherence, communicate shared understandings, and align expectations that support student achievement. Emerging reorganization and alignment efforts are strategic and appreciated by school-based staff. One interviewee stated that "our system is primed to do the right work and teams are ready!"

2. The district's strategic plan, *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*, has been enhanced to include four specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, and time-bound (SMART) goals with key performance indicators that foster data-driven conversations and decisions. In concert with the identification of these goals and metrics, the Board of Education has recently adopted a student-outcomes focused governance model and is committed to building internal coherence.

3. The district has implemented Learning Walks using a common rubric*, Instructional Practice Guide*, to intentionally normalize instructional expectations, identify areas of need, and reduce inequities in instruction across classrooms and buildings.

4. The regularly scheduled stock-taking, Lead and Learn, meetings are creating positive energy and synergy to accelerate the implementation of systems that provide high-quality core Tier 1 instruction and differentiated support.

5. The Learning Community Directors are working towards creating internal coherence across networks and communities. They recognize the need to model consistency to support the communication and implementation of the instructional program, including setting high expectations, providing differentiation and support, and analyzing assessment results.

6. The surrounding community, including philanthropic organizations and local institutions of higher education, is very supportive and excited to work in tandem with the district and shares a moral imperative to provide opportunities and activities to enhance students' experiences and continuing education.

7. The district team supporting students with disabilities is intentionally focused on providing access to the core curriculum at grade-level, including efforts to align instruction to current general education materials and curriculum maps. Co-planning between general education teachers and speech and language pathologists is emerging as a model for inclusion and access.

8. A Teaching Partner or Coach is assigned to every school to support the district's implementation of professional learning communities, provide peer coaching, and develop/support professional development at the site level.

9. The Early Childhood Education department has assessed the strengths and needs of the district's program currently offered to parents in preparation for the implementation of the state-funded universal pre-school program in 2023-24. The department has identified priorities (e.g., a data system to track growth over time, additional building sites, additional dedicated professional learning time, teacher requirements) and is strategically building a more comprehensive program for the community.

Areas of Need

1. There is a lack of organizational coherence and communication, with a default to siloed work, leading to the duplication of services and yielding mixed, contradictory messages at the school level (e.g., Assessment is in Technology; Title III, Grants, and programs are in Finance Department).

2. The district is in a state of flux at every level and will require the type of district leadership that can steady and focus the district.

3. The district is working on structures, but there is very little evidence of a sense of urgency to address academic issues/performance, except the chief academic officer (CAO) and the CLDs.

4. There is a lack of clear, consistent, or coherent set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do.

5. The separation of the Assessment and Accountability departments has led to the inability to make data-driven decisions, use data to design/reform programs for curriculum and professional development.

6. Teachers are conflating the use of iReady and Wonders unit assessments; there is a lack of consistency using unit assessments.

7. There is no systemic data platform other than pilots.

8. There are no mechanisms/structures to use data other than cursory surveys for teachers and principals to give input prior to central office decision-making, especially when addressing professional development needs.

9. There are new EDs and CAO with many silos; there is angst around what was in place and what is to come with trepidation regarding the new superintendent. School choice seems to have been a focus at the district level with a need to "get back down to the teacher level" (no teacher cabinet/advisory group, teachers are not part of Learning Walks).

10. There is a lack of coherent, consistent structure or action plan for supporting personnel at sites. The team heard that many staff do not have content knowledge/professional development support, report to different departments, have no communication protocols, do not have differentiated assignments, or do not have knowledge of how to use data effectively.

11. Special Education: There was no comprehensive document describing the referral and identification processes across the district, no monitoring of eligibility criteria and practices for years, and little integration of special education teachers - lack of support for co-teaching and minimal alignment to general education curriculum, materials, or professional development.

12. Teachers do not respond to surveys because there is no evidence of their voices being heard. They expressed the perception that they do not matter. Teachers feel overwhelmed because they don't know what is important and how to respond to student needs. Teachers feel "numb to district decisions" with so many changes without explanation or data.

13. CLDs are K-12 rather than being deployed based on their expertise. They shared that what elementary schools need is very different from secondary school needs.

14. LCDs may be overwhelmed because they are focused K-12 rather than a specific level (e.g., elementary and secondary). The described finding it hard to bring schools together around instructional focus and support - configuration is not productive.

15. There is a visible movement to reign in autonomous curriculum and instructional materials, but there is still a lingering mindset of autonomy.

16. Some divisions under the CAO have not bought into the movement towards a coherent and cohesive team around instruction (Learning Walks).

17. There is a strong push-pull between lead instructional coaches/lead teachers and content coordinators, and there appears to be a gap in content knowledge for teaching partners.

18. There is a push-pull between providing high-quality instruction and meeting SEL needs (see achievement data below)

    a. There is a disconnect between the work in the Professional Development department to the work of LCD and the Content Coordinators/Teaching Partners

19. The team observed that several in the leadership team do not have K-12 experience.

20. Principals reported:

    a. No alignment regarding how to support schools.

    b. The 'why' is not shared (i.e., data) or why principals have to do what they do.

    c. Expectations are clear but not the 'path' on how to get there.

    d. Unpacking standards is not structured.

    e. Principals identified a disconnect between learning directors.

    f. Teaching partners are generalists.

21. Systems are not in place for principals to request support ("too many layers"). There is also a history of retaliation that inhibits principals and teachers from asking for help or speaking up. Many expressed that the role of the site principal not clearly defined. Many expressed the need for an "operations director" to allow principals to focus on student achievement.

22. Divisions and departments are working with purpose but are not working together. For example, the content area coordinators and coaches do not work with the professional development division, leading to problematic agnostic professional learning/training that is not connected to content-specific pedagogies or materials.

23. There are no mechanisms at the district level beyond cursory surveys for teachers and principals to give input, participate in instructional or curricular design activities (e.g., textbook adoption, professional development content and structure), or request support (e.g., curricular resources, personnel assignments).

24. Principals and teachers expressed frustration that "a small group of people have been making decisions without feedback." Meaningful collaboration has not occured and there is little understanding of "why" those decisions been made.

25. Teachers and administrators are open to change but the lack of collaborative two-way communication has led to confusion and misdirection. For example, the discontinuation of an interim assessment structure the previous year without clear communication of what measure would replace these assessments led to wondering "if high-quality core instruction might not be the focus for the coming year."

26. Board of Education:

    a. There seemed to be a level of distrust among Board members and the superintendent (past and now a concern for the new superintendent).

    b. The Board has also made claims of unfairness and distrust the data that has been presented.

27. The district's curriculum documents or maps do not communicate a vision or expectations for precisely what is to be taught and at what level of rigor, nor do they provide strategies or examples to support the delivery of the content.

28. Instructional frameworks are not yet in place and there is minimal guidance, documents, or PD available to practitioners causing lack of rigorous, equitable instruction. Teachers are not teaching to the level of rigor of the standards, and there are no clear expectations. Teacher mindset determines rigor.

29. APS is implementing new curriculum and SEL at the same time leading to quality control concerns.

30. Curriculum is defined as the products you buy. Guides, standards alignment, etc. are decided building by building. The curriculum does not communicate vision, expectations, etc.

31. Currently, the adopted instructional materials (*Wonders, Bridges*), serve as a "curriculum buffet" with teachers unsure of the essential learning. Other missing elements include guidance for integrating social emotional learning with academic learning, expectations for student work, assessment strategies to guide differentiation, and examples of how to use supplemental resources and technology. The lack of clear curricular guidance can lead to

inequitable and ineffective instructional opportunities for students across classrooms and schools.

32. Curriculum documents and Standards-based PD is being developed externally, but interviewees expressed:

    a. A need to include teachers in the professional development planning,

    b. That developing curriculum documents is a form of PD, more valuable than outsourcing, and

    c. There is no guidance for intervention materials.

33. Ther is a need to develop comprehensive academic expectations that would be communicated district wide as course correction to previous autonomy.

34. There is a lack of clear Tier 1 expectations for student groups, especially in special education settings and for English learners.

35. The district's enacted Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is not clearly defined. There are varying degrees of understanding of the essential components of MTSS among leaders. The MTSS does not appear to relate back to Tier 1 core instruction, too quickly moving students to Tiers 2 and 3. The high percentage of English learners identified for special education services and African American students identified for behavior interventions are most likely indicative of an underperforming MTSS.

36. The eligibility and identification processes for special programs (i.e., special education and gifted and talented services) needs to be audited and calibrated to standardized criteria to avoid disproportional participation.

37. A system of multiple assessment measures and mechanisms/protocols to use actionable data is not in place to progress monitor and guide instruction. There is a singular, over-reliance on *iReady, Bridges,* and *Wonders* diagnostic and unit assessments without a common platform to collect and disseminate the data.

38. Several interviewees noted that the district professional development is mostly limited to the implementation of new instructional resources, i.e., "recipe-based" instruction, mirroring the textbook or other instructional materials.

39. Required professional learning sessions are not differentiated and do not account for prior knowledge or implementation status. For example, all school staff were required to attend the same orientation training to implement *Wonders*, yet some school sites have been using these instructional materials for several years.

40. There is a need to develop professional learning aligned to the role of the Learning Community Director and Principal that addresses their responsibilities as a supervisor (e.g., classroom observation metrics).

41. The districtwide initiative to establish a professional learning community at every site is hampered by a lack of professional development to address a data protocol, co-planning, or peer coaching model for principals, teaching partners, and classroom teachers.

42. There is a district preference for agnostic, rather than content-specific knowledge and pedagogies, evidenced in both the professional learning/training offerings and the assignment of teaching partners and instructional coordinators as "generalists." Without content-specific professional learning, teachers are less equipped to employ appropriate strategies to successfully address the most common misconceptions, most difficult concepts, most effective sequencing of concepts, relevant connections, and essential knowledge and skills of a particular content area.

Recommendations and Next Steps

This section contains the recommendations and proposals of the Council's Strategic Support Team to re-structure and augment the academic program. There are multiple issues listed in the Findings section and many, some long-term, recommendations are addressed below. These recommendations are specific to the identified foundational high priority needs to:

- Create organizational coherence,

- Build trust and a collaborative mindset,

- Accelerate the district's efforts to provide equity in learning,

- Design and implement standards-based, rigorous curriculum,

- Enhance instructional delivery and build teacher capacity, and

- Increase student achievement and well-being.

There may be a temptation to move through these proposals as quickly as possible. However, many of these recommendations involve transformational change, large in scale and scope, and some may be a significant change from the status quo. Some of the recommended next steps may be addressed in tandem and/or are described in detail as supporting another proposal. Do not let urgency be the enemy of purposeful, strategic, and high-quality work. Initially, identify no more than three initiatives/goals anchored in a theory of action. Too many goals at one time will fragment district resources and dilute the importance of the identified goals. Pay attention to the pace of change management – the district has experienced several recent changes in leadership and methodologies. The overarching goal should be to build trust within divisions, departments, and schools across the district. It will be critical to communicate the rationale for change and remain focused on aligning all actions to the identified goals.

Organization and Coherence

The singularly decisive recommendation from the Council's Strategic Support Team is to engage in a systematic and systemic change management process to identify, communicate, and implement a common agenda across departments and schools. Follow the recommendations below to use a "Theory of Action" model and embrace "simplexity:" take a complex problem, identify the smallest number of key components (the simple part) and make them gel (the complex part).

1. Identify initially no more than three initiatives/goals in service of student achievement to guide the work of the district. Typically, these initiatives would be identified by senior leadership, using data from the Learning Walks, student assessments (e.g., CMAS, PSAT, SAT), and staff surveys to determine areas of need.

2. Create a cross-functional team (including principal and teacher representation) led by the Chief Academic Officer to develop a specific, explicit, sequential Theory of Action related to each of the three initiatives. For each, identify criteria for the evidence of success and how success will be measured. Every subsequent action taken by the district should directly relate back to, and support, one of these initiatives. (see Appendices D, E – Theory of Action guidance articles).

3. Systematically and frequently communicate to all stakeholders WHY (the rationale) these initiatives were identified (i.e., based on data) and the desired results. It will be critical to communicate with specificity and transparency to build trust and model coherence. Use consistent and varied communication opportunities to build a sense of urgency and ownership for the achievement and outcomes of all students.

4. Turn the district's anchor initiatives/goals (supporting and/or related aims in service of the initial three) into a strategic plan that guides a multi-year strategy for implementing recommendations in this report for boosting student achievement. Within the plan, lay out the timing and sequencing of the implementation of the recommendations and agreed upon reforms. This should take multiple years to be done well and not rushed.

The arrival of the new Superintendent and anticipated and recommended reorganization of the central office structures have the potential to exacerbate challenges from disconnected initiatives, staffing assignments, stakeholder misperceptions, and instructional pedagogies. To build coherence and focus the direction of the district, examine and address the existing silos and duplication of offices/departments. Align the reorganization of the central office to the identified goals, implementation, and measurement elements of the newly adopted Theory of Action plan.

Effective change management requires consistent, clear, transparent communication: WHAT are the new structures (who is doing what), WHY the changes were made (compelling rationale aligned to the Superintendent's vision and current data), and HOW they will affect staff/stakeholders (e.g., reporting structures). Specific and transparent communication will foster the district's ability to control the message and desired change process.

Alignment, trust, and coherence begin with Superintendent of Schools and the Chief Academic Officer. They must share a unified vision for student success and uniformly communicate that vision and how the district will accelerate academic achievement for all students.

5. Critically examine structures (divisions and departments) to ensure the role of each is aligned to the district initiatives and eliminate duplication. Address the existing silos (groups of people working on the same objectives without collaboration or communication) evident in the departments of Professional Learning, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Special Education, and Multi-linguistic learners.

6. Consider realigning the schools assigned to each Learning Community Director to reflect his/her specific expertise and the unique needs of each level (i.e., grouping all high schools together).

7. Reassign operational responsibilities to a learning community operations director/specialist. This position would report to the LCD (or several LCDs depending on budget constraints) and work cross-functionally with Finance, Operations, and Human Resources and take ownership of all non-academic areas of learning community-based responsibilities. This position would provide one point of contact for principals for all operational needs and allow the LCD to focus more intently on teaching and learning (see Appendix H. Job Description - Birmingham City Schools). The Council team can provide alternatives to this structure if needed.

8. Require that the Learning Community Directors coordinate their instructional strategies. Provide targeted professional development for them on instructional standards, leadership, and instructional coaching. Design concrete goals for the academic improvement of schools within their network and hold them accountable for making progress on those goals.

9. The review/clarification of roles may require reorganizing departments within divisions such as moving the Department of Accountability from the Division of Technology to the Division of Equity in Learning to work alongside the Department of Assessment and Research more effectively. Establish clear and direct processes for communication and collaboration.

10. Establish a collaborative communication process between the Board of Education and the Superintendent to support their student outcomes-focused governance, including the sharing of data and what the data mean.

11. Recognize and prepare for push-back using the phases of team development model. (see for example Appendix I. Tuckman's Model of Team Development).

The district's work towards coherence and whole system success will be ongoing and evolve as the system examines data and identifies what works and results in measurable progress for all students. Two key levers/practices are emerging from this year's work and should underpin the goals identified in the district's Theory of Action (see recommendation #2 above in this section).

12. The first key lever is the new learning walk protocol that zeroes in on pedagogy – what teaching and learning practices are specifically effective. The institution of common metrics/rubrics that are level set, calibrated, and shared with principals communicates and clarifies expectations, identifies areas of need, and informs next steps. The *Instructional Practice Guide (Achieve the Core)* used this year by the district identifies key indicators of student and teacher behaviors that align to high-quality standards-aligned instruction. An additional resource, *Instructional Rounds Exemplar* may be used in conjunction with the *Guide,* providing a comprehensive approach that includes a protocol for an pre-brief for participants, classroom visit preparation, classroom visits, group de-brief, principal de-brief, and return visit/future support. (see Appendix J. Instructional Rounds Exemplar).

13. The second key lever, data-driven conversation, is facilitated, in part, by the first, using a learning walk protocol to focus on key strategies observed in real time that accelerate teaching and learning. Sharing visit data, inferences, and wonderings is a key component of a data-driven conversation. Other critical sources of data include common, standardized

interim/benchmark, and summative assessments. Data-driven conversations are foundational to successful professional learning communities. Implementing recommendation #1 under Accountability and Assessment will allow instructional leaders to collaborate more effectively with the departments of Assessment, Accountability, and Research to develop and disseminate data literacy tools for district and school leaders. (see Appendix K. Telling a Data Story).

14. Allow instructional autonomy in schools only if all student groups within a school are performing well. If gaps exist between student groups (e.g., low income students, students with disabilities, English learners, African American males, Hispanic females) in an individual school, autonomy cannot be earned until the performance of all student groups are consistently higher.

Curriculum and Instruction

A. Instructional Framework

An instructional framework should communicate a clear and unifying vision for high-quality school and classroom practice and the district's commitment to instructional equity and excellence. The framework should delineate grade-level instructional priorities (essential content and skills) while attending to unfinished learning/learning loss. The framework should guide teachers and leaders to ensure that grade-level content is accessible to all students, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and specialized instruction for English learners. The framework should also address and integrate the social-emotional needs and mental health of students. Moreover, a common framework can serve as a course correction for the past practice of instructional autonomy. Two Council of Great City Schools publications, *Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures* and *Addressing Mental Health and Social-Emotional Wellness in the COVID-19 Crisis* provide resources and examples to support the district's current review and restructure of an instructional framework.

1. Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, create a team of senior leaders (e.g., division and department leaders), principals, and teaching partners/teachers, including those who work with special populations (e.g., multilingual learners) and the MTSS department, to review and revise the current instructional framework and identify what classroom scaffolds within Tier 1 instruction should look like across schools and content areas including instructional strategies/moves.

2. The instructional framework should identify teaching practices and learning environments that are (1) standards-based, (2) evidence-based, (3) engaging, (4) differentiated, (5) culturally responsive, and (6) data-driven. (see Appendix L. Instructional Framework Exemplar).

3. Solicit and accept feedback: share the framework with principals and teachers, using the team members, especially site-based teachers, as ambassadors.

4.   As the framework is being created, begin developing guidance for administrators to observe classroom instruction, indicating what they should look for in terms of appropriate instructional strategies. Align and link the current learning walk rubric to the practices described in the framework.

5.   Content specialists should provide input and be able to communicate how the identified practices support content-specific instruction and how the strategies are deployed within a content-centered environment. Also, the revamped curriculum scope and sequence documents should reflect this guidance in greater detail (see subsequent Curriculum section).

6.   To launch the new framework, select several (not all) practices to focus on for the school year. Design and structure professional development around the new framework (more on this in a subsequent section). Additional practices from the instructional framework can be introduced, with support for staff, in subsequent years as teachers and leaders are ready.

B. Curriculum

1.   Establish a shared understanding of what "curriculum" is (listed below #5) and is not (a textbook or instructional materials).

2.   Review, restructure, and enhance the current effort to develop content area curriculum documents. Transition from vendor-created or external documents to building capacity within the district for curriculum excellence and expertise. The new curriculum documents should define what Tier 1 high-quality, rigorous, standards-based English language arts and math instruction look like and what they do not look like at each grade level.

3.   Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, begin with a few documents (one grade level each for English language arts and math) to revise the current curriculum maps to guide instruction using a cross-functional team approach (senior leaders, principals, content area specialists, instructional coordinators, teachers). Use teacher teams to build ownership of the revamped guidance; the object is not to tell teachers how to teach, but to provide clarity on what students should know from their teaching and equip teachers with the tools needed.

4.   Ensure the district's content area specialists, especially in reading and math, are experts in their fields. Provide intensive professional development to upgrade their skills and expertise. These specialists (and their teams) should be the "go to people" for the multi-year curriculum reform work.

5.   Anchor the curriculum guides in rigorous standards rather than the scope and sequence of the adopted textbooks. Keep in mind that textbooks are not the curriculum, but rather resources to support the curriculum.

6.   Structure/base the team's development of the scope and sequence documents using the framework and criteria developed by the Council of Great City Schools: *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High Quality*

District Curriculum. Weave in the practices described in the district's newly created instructional framework. Adhere to the following curriculum document tenets:

a. Be clear about what must be taught and at what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level (unpacking standards).

b. Build instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level.

c. Articulate explicitly standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year.

d. Provide examples of rigorous tasks that require students to demonstrate the depth of knowledge and skills to complete specified tasks.

e. Present samples of student work that illustrate the quality of work expected of students when they complete a unit.

f. Embed scaffolds or other supports that address gaps in student knowledge and the needs of low-performing students, English language learners, and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment.

g. Provide support to teachers in addressing unfinished learning as they work to meet grade level expectations.

h. Include written links to adopted textbooks, materials, or digital applications to indicate where the materials are high-quality, where gaps exist and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

i. Provide suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met learning expectations (formative and interim assessment tools).

7. Imbed social emotional learning (SEL) and identity development into trauma-informed instruction using diverse texts written by diverse authors, tasks where teachers can cultivate and strengthen relationships with students, and guidance to manage student discussions so that all voices are heard and honored. The English Language Arts planning guide exemplar (see Appendix M. English Language Arts Planning Guide) includes both SEL and identity/criticality instruction. A second exemplar, a history/social science lesson, illustrates transformative social emotional learning (T-SEL). (see Appendix N. Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics)

8. Take time to make sure this work is done well, not fast. Use the rubric developed by the Council of Great City Schools: *Curriculum Quality Rubric: A Self-Assessment Tool for Districts* to formatively assess the curriculum during the development and testing/pilot phases. Enlist teachers and schools to pilot the curriculum documents and provide feedback

prior to launching districtwide. Build in on-going feedback loops and make needed adjustments based on that input.

9. In subsequent years, build out the revisions and implement them across grade levels, supported by professional development so that teachers and administrators gain an understanding of the district's expectations.

Considerations for English Language Arts Scope and Sequence Documents (Appendix M. English Language Arts Planning Guide)

1. Build district knowledge of and promote the use of the *iReady Teacher Toolbox* which provides standards-based resources to introduce new concepts, reteach standards, and address unfinished learning.

2. Integrate English language development (ELD) standards within the grade-level ELA scope and sequence document.

3. Imbed examples of scaffolds for students with disabilities, English learners, and struggling students into the curriculum guide with examples of what students should be able to do at each proficiency level.

4. Design essential questions to help students build depth of knowledge on a specific grade level concept. Provide guidance to help teachers connect anchor texts, activities, and supplemental resources to the theme as they plan daily lessons.

5. Create thematic units that correspond to the standards, not driven by textbooks.

6. Include sample units and lessons that build on what students have learned in previous grades, especially phonics instruction in grades K-5 and writing instruction at all grade levels.

7. Include guidance on writing instruction that articulates best practices and how to assess student writing not only for formatting and conventions but for clear articulation of ideas. Include rubrics and exemplars of student writing.

8. Address the level of proficiency students are expected to demonstrate in reading comprehension on literary and informational text with guidance on text complexity (e.g., levels of meaning, syntax/structure, language, and knowledge demands).

9. Provide guidance on how to teach reading that addresses the needs of struggling students, English learners, students with disabilities to build fluency and comprehension of grade-level texts and academic vocabulary.

10. Incorporate and leverage topic or theme-based text sets that are aligned to grade-level standards to augment *Wonders*.

11. Review current instructional materials/resources for cultural relevance, identify gaps, and reference support materials to address those gaps.

Considerations for Math Scope and Sequence Documents (see Appendix O. Bridges in Mathematics Unit Guide Exemplar)

1. Begin with a clear vision for strong mathematics teaching that includes purpose-driven work, offering rich and meaningful tasks, promoting equitable discourse, encouraging questioning and curiosity, and valuing diversity.

2. Be explicit in identifying what needs to be taught and address the depth of knowledge students are expected to attain in these areas in each grade level.

3. Use a progression of standards document as the frame. Lay out the progression of concepts, knowledge, and skills across and within grade levels. Identify what students have learned in previous grades and how that learning connects to standards/objectives in the current grade level.

4. Provide clarity in what is expected and what is needed to minimize misconceptions and misunderstandings.

5. Specify what levels of proficiency students are expected to demonstrate in their classroom work, tasks, and assignments at different points throughout the school year to be on-track to meet grade-level expectations. This guidance should include performance targets for each unit with annotated exemplars of student work, and guidance on how to move students to the next level.

C. High School Progression Framework

1. Create a high school progression framework that gives students and parents/guardians a snapshot of required courses for graduation, identifies options for more rigorous courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, honors), career technical education (CTE) courses, elective courses, and programs for special populations offered in the district. Publish a course selection guide that can be used by counselors, students, parents/guardians to map out the high school coursework experience.

2. Develop a vertical articulation sequence to ensure accelerated courses in middle school set students up for entry and success in advanced high school courses.

3. As pathways (multiyear sequences of courses that integrate academic and technical knowledge, skills, training) are developed and mature, include them in the course selection guide.

Assessment and Accountability

1. Move the Accountability Department from the Division of Technology to the Division of Equity in Learning to work alongside the Department of Assessment and Research more effectively and avoid duplication of roles and responsibilities. Consider creating a direct reporting line between the department and the superintendent to ensure that data and reports are not filtered before reaching the superintendent's desk.

2. Adopt a districtwide data management/platform system that supports monitoring student progress, data sharing and analysis, program evaluation, and links to the district's MTSS. This may be an expansion of the district's current use of eduCLIMBER.

3. More clearly define the use of *iReady* as a publisher-diagnostic assessment. Provide professional learning for the LCDs to deepen their understanding of *iReady.*

4. As the curriculum guides are being revised, begin the process of revising/creating benchmark assessments so that they align to state standards and the rigor of the new curriculum. Consider requiring the administration and collection of data from these benchmark assessments from all schools that have not earned autonomy based on the performance of all student groups. Include open-ended items. The aggregated data can be used by content area specialists (curriculum leads) and assessment specialists to make appropriate decisions about student success and weakness on the standards and inform curriculum revisions.

5. Standardize assessment practices across learning communities to determine systemwide more accurately if students are on track to meet grade-level expectations. Ensure that the assessments align to the standards and rigor of the revised curriculum guides.

6. Include beginning and intermediate English learners in the revised benchmark assessments. This may include a portfolio approach at grade-level that allows them to demonstrate their content knowledge while learning English.

7. Embed in curriculum and/or instructional framework documents the source and role of diagnostic, interim, and summative assessments and identify required data to be uploaded to a central platform.

8. Develop an assessment calendar that identifies required and optional assessments (e.g., *iReady, Wonders* and *Bridges* units, benchmark, Advanced Placement, state CMAS assessments).

9. Prioritize developing assessments internally rather than using vendor products and metrics. Often, these vendor assessments do not reflect the rigor of the standards at each grade level or align to the district' curriculum.

10. Develop and disseminate a data protocol for looking at student work and progress monitoring. Provide teaching partners with professional development to support their role at schools and leading PLC data discussions.

11. Create or obtain from schools, anchor papers of student work that illustrate the rigor expected by the district to support PLC discussions.

Professional Development

1. In concert with the development of the new instructional framework and curriculum documents, create a multi-year professional learning plan/calendar for teachers and leaders. Align the plan to the three initiatives the district has identified and add on in subsequent years. Be strategic: correlate the professional learning sessions with the deployment of the framework and scope and sequence documents.

2. Use data from the learning walks, interim, and summative student assessments to guide and prioritize the development of professional learning.

3. Include teachers/teaching partners, principals, and community directors in the planning from the start to build ownership and commitment to the results. This collaborative work must go beyond surveys; teacher voice as the "practitioners" is integral to the planning.

4. While designing professional learning and trainings, adhere to the following features discussed in detail in the Council's publication: *Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining High-Quality Professional Development*.

    a. A focus on content – how to teach specific content and how students learn that content in conjunction with the materials that are being used in the classroom. Discipline-specific, content-focused professional development supports teaching and learning within the classroom context as opposed to generic professional learning delivered externally or divorced from school or district context.

    b. Support for collaboration – teachers need opportunities to discuss instructional innovations with colleagues and address issues that arise when implementing new instructional approaches.

    c. Feedback and reflection – build in time to ensure teachers can think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice. Effective feedback provides teachers a clear vision of success and an accurate assessment of their strengths and challenges in meeting expectations.

    d. Personalized coaching and support – effective coaching is characterized as individualized (one-on-one), intensive (at least every couple of weeks), sustained (throughout a semester or year), and focused (deliberate practice on specific skills) with an observation and feedback cycle.

5. Provide clarity to stakeholders about how the roll out of professional development is aligned to the district's strategy to boost student outcomes and build staff capacity.

6. Differentiate the professional development by role and job required proficiency, not "one size fits all." Consider the background experience, prior training, expertise, and needs of individual roles (teachers, principals, learning community directors). For example, some sites and teachers have previous experience with *Wonders* and do not need the orientation training; Learning Community Directors need to know what to look for during observations/learning walks. Consider assigning content area specialists to each LCD to increase their instructional knowledge and help translate what is expected from the central office to the school site.

7. Scale Lexia LETRS training to all K-5 teachers.

8. Focus on unpacking standards, creating rigorous tasks aligned to the standards, and addressing misconceptions when designing professional learning. Teachers need content expertise to support their instructional delivery.

9. Provide special education and general education teachers collaborative professional learning to strengthen inclusion and co-teaching practices.

10. Consider transitioning current content-agnostic/generalist teaching partners and instructional coordinators to content-specific coaches who are experts in content pedagogy and strategies.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

1. Establish leadership teams at the district, regional, and campus levels to oversee MTSS implementation. Establish clear roles and responsibilities for teams at each level. For the district team, identify a representative sample of individuals representing central office units directly and indirectly supporting equitable literacy (and other academic areas as desired) and positive behavior and social-emotional supports. Include personnel with roles related to the improvement of teaching/learning for all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, students with emotional/behavioral disabilities, etc. Follow the same process for establishing regional and campus level MTSS teams and identify the staff who will support these teams across the district.

2. Articulate a definition of the district's MTSS that is shared with all academic departments, LCDs, deans, and principals. The emphasis should be on strong Tier 1 instructional and behavioral systems and ensuring that interventions relate back to Tier 1 instruction.

3. Critically examine disaggregated data around disproportionality within Tiers 2 and 3, especially focus on Hispanic and African American students.

4. Build in multiple steps and supports within Tier 1 to minimize the disproportionate referrals of English learners with normative language development and African American students with behavior concerns to Tier 2 and 3 systems.

5. Create a dashboard to capture what steps have been taken prior to referring a student to the LCD for Tier 3 services.

6. Create a communication system/process for sharing information at the site level for the deans who attend the Culture and Climate Academy and their site principals.

7. Create a protocol document to guide site-based MTSS teams.

Special Populations

1. Audit the eligibility criteria and process for special education services and placements.

2. Create a comprehensive document describing the referral and identification processes for special education and gifted and talented services across the district.

3. Design professional development for administrators and teachers to change the culture and climate so that students with disabilities are perceived as needing general Tier 1 instruction and behavior supports first so that staff takes full ownership of all students being served in the district. Include training to support "least restrictive environment" placements.

4. Ensure that dually identified students (English learners and students with disability) receive daily English language development instruction.

5. The curriculum revisions addressed previously should include revamping English language development documents that align to the English language arts curriculum.

Cautions and Considerations

The Aurora Public Schools district has experienced a significant amount of change in recent years, including reorganization and shifts in positions. In response, there is a level of cultural mistrust, aligned to the forming and storming phases of team development described in Appendix I. Tuckman's Model of Team Development. The following maxims have provided invaluable guidance, support, motivation, and fortitude to your colleagues in the education community who share your commitment to the success of all students.

- **Go slow to go fast**: balance urgency with diligence and quality.

- **Explain the "why":** communicate the rationale (cite data) and how the change will address the problem and impact staff and students.

- **Be intentional about strategic abandonment**: when everything is important, nothing is important.

- **Practice empathy**: elevate "teacher voice" and be open to feedback.

- **Trust the process:** prepare for push-back and leverage the stages of change management.

- **Follow your North Star:** align your decisions and actions to the district's mission and vision.

- **Celebrate the small wins**: successive small wins lead to greater accomplishments!

Links to Council of the Great City Schools Resources

Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

Curriculum Quality Rubric: A Self-Assessment Tool for Districts

Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining High-Quality Professional Development

Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures

Addressing Mental Health and Social-Emotional Wellness in the COVID-19 Crisis

Academic Review of Teaching and Learning
Aurora Public Schools

October 2023

The Aurora Public Schools (APS) Board of Education, under the direction of President Debra Gerkin, requested that the Council of Great City Schools conduct a high-level review and evaluation of the district's academic program and recommend changes that would align and enhance a rigorous teaching and learning program with expectations and support for all students. The review of the district's academic program, conducted in April 2023, focused on:

- High-quality core instruction (curriculum implementation and impact),
- Targeted and intensive supplemental instruction and differentiation,
- Assessment systems to measure student outcomes, and
- Professional learning for teachers and administrators.

In response to this request, the Council assembled a Strategic Support Team (SST) comprised of senior executives with extensive experience in academics and curriculum and instruction from other major urban school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals. (Appendix A provides brief biographical sketches of the team members).

Robin Hall
Chief of Schools/Director of Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools (Washington, D.C.)

Cathy Martin
Associate Chief of Academics (Retired)
Denver Public Schools (Colorado)

Jermaine Dawson
Deputy Superintendent
Philadelphia Public Schools (Pennsylvania)

Pamela Seki
Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development (Retired)
Long Beach Unified School District (California)

Diane Quisenberry
Independent Consultant
Columbus, Ohio

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the review team. The following is a summary of what the Council team observed during interviews with district leadership, specialists, teachers, Board of Education directors, other stakeholders, and our review of data and materials. The report is divided into two sections: Findings (areas of strength and need) and Recommendations and Next Steps. Within the scope of the report, the academic program areas addressed include:

- Organization (organizational structure, coherence, leadership),
- Curriculum and Instruction,
- Assessment,
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS),
- Professional Development, and
- Special Populations.

Current Environment

The Council team met with the interim Superintendent of the Aurora Public Schools to understand the expectations and intent of the peer review. At the time of the review, the Board of Education was engaged in a comprehensive search process to identify a new Superintendent. Subsequently, the district selected Michael Giles, Jr. as the new Superintendent. Mr. Giles has recently assumed the role of Superintendent. There is acknowledgement across the system that churn in leadership positions with unconnected and changing aims and initiatives has created the need for an intentional and coherent change management process. The current challenge and imperative to deploy an effective change management process to guide the district through both organizational and cultural change will determine the district's successes (or failures) for years to come. It is important to create a roadmap to academic success that involves establishing a clear vision, mission, and theory of action that will guide the work of central office, principals, and teachers in support of student outcomes with clarity about evidence of success.

The team observed that there is currently an intentional focus on equity in instruction across the district and creating support structures that will advance student performance across all populations. District leaders recognize that the extent of instructional autonomy at the school level should not compete with shared expectations for common curricula and pedagogy. Pulling back the past practice of autonomous schools in service of equity and common expectations is priming the system for opportunities to advance a new instructional framework and curricular documents; both projects have been identified as priorities by the district. Signaling a laser focus on core Tier 1 instruction, the district implemented Learning Walks that will be foundational to the conversations leaders are engaging in to envision explicit strategies and content that are to be expected in every APS classroom.

To conduct its work, the SST reviewed documents, analyzed available data, and conducted on-site interviews with staff members.[1] In addition, the team studied the district's instructional

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[1] The Council's reports are based on interviews with district staff and others, a review of documents, observations of

programs with a focus on special populations (e.g., English learners, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students). The Council team assembled their findings and observations and developed recommendations designed to assist the district with improving the academic program leading to desired student outcomes. (see Appendix B. Individuals Interviewed; Appendix C. Documents Reviewed; Appendix D. Working Agenda).

Aurora Public School District

The Aurora Public School District (APS), also known as the Adams-Arapahoe School District 28J, was established in 1885 when Mr. William Smith requested that the county establish a school district. He served on the board of education from 1885 to 1935, and the first record of the Arapahoe County District #28 dates to 1907. In 1962, school districts were reorganized. Aurora Public Schools was formed from Aurora, Altura, Clyde Miller, First Creek, Sable, and Tollgate Districts.[2] Today, APS is the fifth largest school district in the state of Colorado. APS currently serves a diverse enrollment of over 38,000 Kindergarten through twelfth grade students in 58 schools and centers, and the overall student enrollment is 56.4% Hispanic/Latino, 17.3% Black, 14.0% White, 5.8% Two or More Races, 4.9% Asian, and 1.6% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander/Native American or Alaska Native. Students are supported by more than 3,500 employees.[3]

The Board of Education sets policy that governs the Little Rock School District. The Board is made up of seven (7) members who are all elected at-large across the community with staggered election cycles. The Board is responsible for selecting and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent is responsible to the Board for efficiently operating the school system and managing the APS current expenditure budget of approximately $473 million for district-operated schools.[2] The Superintendent is also responsible for developing and implementing the APS Strategic Plan, *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*, in partnership with the Board of Education.

Academic Performance

Based on Colorado Performance Frameworks (see Exhibit 1) retrieved by the SST for analysis, APS was last fully Accredited (2nd highest level) in 2009. In 2010, the district was Accredited with Improvement Plan (Level 3) followed by five consecutive years of Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan status.[4] In 2017, the district improved to Accredited with Improvement Plan for six consecutive years earning 45.7 percentage points in 2022. In 2023, the district declined to 42.8

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operations, and professional judgment. The team conducting the interviews relies on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming, but the SST cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by interviewees.

[2] Source: A Brief History of the APS Board of Education. Retrieved from https://www.aurorak12.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3217528&pageId=3743062.

[3] Quick Fact Sheet about APS. Retrieved from: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WsiZ8P49U5EPKFvkCU2NBZQyXnBqD3yssngTaL_StEc/preview.

[4] Important Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on educational instruction, state assessments were cancelled in Spring 2020 and state accountability was paused for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. State accountability resumed in 2022-2023 with 1-year transitional ratings and is now returning to normal with 1-year and multi-year (2-year) preliminary ratings for 2023-2024.

percentage points and dropped to Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan with Low Participation (below 95% test participation rates in two or more content areas).

Exhibit 1. Colorado Department of Education Performance Frameworks, 2017

DISTRICT ACCREDITATION RATINGS

ACCREDITED WITH DISTINCTION

ACCREDITED

ACCREDITED WITH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ACCREDITED WITH PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ACCREDITED WITH TURNAROUND PLAN

INSUFFICIENT STATE DATA: SMALL TESTED POPULATION*

INSUFFICIENT STATE DATA: LOW PARTICIPATION**

These Performance Framework ratings are based on several accountability measures including the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, graduation rates, and other measures. The following exhibits detail the district's performance on several of these measures compared to the state since the 2016-17 school year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, data for the 2020-21 school year are not reported when state spring assessments were suspended. Exhibit 2 illustrates the CMAS ELA performance from 2017 to 2023. The data indicate that the difference in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding ELA expectations between APS and Colorado has grown about two percentage points (1.7) since 2017 (19.7 percentage points in 2017, 19.8 percentage points in 2018, 20.4 percentage points in 2019, 20.6 percentage points in 2022, and 21.4 percentage points in 2023). The 1.7 percentage point increase indicates that the ELA gap between APS students and the state has grown slightly over time.

Exhibit 2. CMS English Language Arts Performance Across All Grades, 2017 through 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Exhibit 3 illustrates the CMAS Math performance from 2017 to 2023. The data indicate that the difference in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding Math expectations between APS and Colorado fluctuated across years (17.5 percentage points in 2017, 18.3 percentage points in 2018, 17.3 percentage points in 2019, 18.6 percentage points in 2022, and 18.5 percentage points in 2023). The relatively small, one percentage point, difference indicates that the Math gap between APS students and the state has been relatively consistent over time.

Exhibit 3. CMS Math Performance Across All Grades, 2017 through 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

The SST also analyzed the CMAS performance for APS compared to the state in ELA (Exhibit 4) and Math (Exhibit 5) by grade level for the 2021-22 assessment year. In both ELA and Math, the gaps between the district and the state are relatively consistent as well, and the pattern of increases and decreases across years mirrors the state pattern across grade levels.

Exhibit 4. CMS English Language Arts Performance By Grade Level, 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Exhibit 5. CMS Math Performance By Grade Level, 2023

Source: Colorado Department of Education

The SST also analyzed performance for select student groups (Hispanic/Latino, African American, White, Low Income, Students with Disabilities, and English language learners) between 2017 and 2023 (see Appendix E). All groups have consistently performed below like student groups at the state. Similar to the overall student performance reported earlier, performance for each of the student groups is relatively consistent over time. One exception is African American students where the gap between Aurora and Colorado has closed in ELA and mathematics, 4.1 and 2.5 percentage points, respectively. In addition, African American students are slight above (0.2 percentage points) their pre-pandemic proficiency rates in English Language Arts. Students with disabilities are also slightly above their pre-pandemic proficiency rates in ELA (1.1 percentage points) and mathematics (0.4 percentage points).

Exhibit 6 shows the change in the Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate for APS compared to Colorado. In 2017, the graduation rate was lowest at 67.6%. Since that year, the graduation rate has generally remained at about 76%, except in 2020 when the rate peaked at 79%. The state graduation rate increased 2.3 percentage points between 2017 and 2022.

Exhibit 6. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2017 to 2022

Graduation Rates

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
Aurora: 67.6%, 76.5%, 76.2%, 79.0%, 76.2%, 75.9%
Colorado: 79.0%, 80.7%, 81.1%, 81.9%, 81.7%, 82.3%

■ Aurora ■ Colorado

Source: Colorado Department of Education

Overall, APS performance has remained consistent over the years. In 2022, the Board of Education adopted a set of Results desired for the district with Limitations identified based on the vision and values of the community. The Results and Limitations are identified below.

The APS Board's adopted Results are:

1. **Early Literacy**: The percentage of 3rd grade students in APS-operated schools who demonstrate grade level literacy skills based on CMAS English Language Arts/Literacy assessment will increase from 19.7% in August 2022 to 28.2% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
2. **High School Graduation Rate**: The percentage of APS students in APS-operated schools graduating in four years will increase from an internal estimate of 75.3% in 2022 (available January 2023) to 78% in 2025 (available January 2026) based on the new Colorado graduation requirements, which requires a demonstration of college and career readiness. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
3. **Equity**: The percentage of 6th grade Hispanic/Latinx and Black students in APS-operated schools who ARE on grade level in English/Language Arts/Literacy and Math, as measured by CMAS, will increase from 13% in August 2022 to 20% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
4. **Equity**: The percentage of 9th grade Black and Hispanic/Latinx students in APS-operated schools who ARE on grade level, as measured by PSAT, will increase from 15.8% in August 2022 to 22% in August 2025. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

The APS Board's adopted Limitations are:

- **Limitation 1**: The Superintendent may not allow implementation or adoption of any programming that does not prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 2:** The Superintendent may not allow the urgency of academic achievement to outweigh the needs of the whole child, including the need for art, music, physical

education, social emotional learning, and mental health support. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

- **Limitation 3**: The Superintendent may not propose major decisions to the board without first engaging students, parents, community, and staff.
  (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 4**: The Superintendent may neither cause nor allow district circumstances for current or prospective students, their parents/guardians, or community members that are unsafe, undignified, disrespectful, or unnecessarily intrusive or restrictive. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)
- **Limitation 5**: The Superintendent will not allow the retention rate of Black and Hispanic/Latino educators to be significantly below the retention rate of all educators in APS-operated schools. (*Adopted September 20, 2022*)

After meeting with Superintendent Giles and his team, the Council SST is confident that the staff, with the governance support of the school board, will be able to improve student outcomes. This report includes recommendations to prioritize the implementation of a high-quality core (Tier 1) instructional program to advance student achievement and equity. Staff interviewed expressed that they are looking forward to a new instructional vision for the district. This report is written to support the new instructional vision for the district by sharing findings, observations, and recommendations designed to assist the district with improving the academic program.

Project Findings and Observations

Areas of Strength

1. There is a new energy and focus on the district's mission and vision which has created opportunities to build coherence, communicate shared understandings, and align expectations that support student achievement. Emerging reorganization and alignment efforts are strategic and appreciated by school-based staff. One interviewee stated that "our system is primed to do the right work and teams are ready!"

2. The district's strategic plan, *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*, has been enhanced to include four specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, and time-bound (SMART) goals with key performance indicators that foster data-driven conversations and decisions. In concert with the identification of these goals and metrics, the Board of Education has recently adopted a student-outcomes focused governance model and is committed to building internal coherence.

3. The district has implemented Learning Walks using a common rubric*, Instructional Practice Guide*, to intentionally normalize instructional expectations, identify areas of need, and reduce inequities in instruction across classrooms and buildings.

4. The regularly scheduled stock-taking, Lead and Learn, meetings are creating positive energy and synergy to accelerate the implementation of systems that provide high-quality core Tier 1 instruction and differentiated support.

5. The Learning Community Directors are working towards creating internal coherence across networks and communities. They recognize the need to model consistency to support the communication and implementation of the instructional program, including setting high expectations, providing differentiation and support, and analyzing assessment results.

6. The surrounding community, including philanthropic organizations and local institutions of higher education, is very supportive and excited to work in tandem with the district and shares a moral imperative to provide opportunities and activities to enhance students' experiences and continuing education.

7. The district team supporting students with disabilities is intentionally focused on providing access to the core curriculum at grade-level, including efforts to align instruction to current general education materials and curriculum maps. Co-planning between general education teachers and speech and language pathologists is emerging as a model for inclusion and access.

8. A Teaching Partner or Coach is assigned to every school to support the district's implementation of professional learning communities, provide peer coaching, and develop/support professional development at the site level.

9. The Early Childhood Education department has assessed the strengths and needs of the district's program currently offered to parents in preparation for the implementation of the state-funded universal pre-school program in 2023-24. The department has identified priorities (e.g., a data system to track growth over time, additional building sites, additional dedicated professional learning time, teacher requirements) and is strategically building a more comprehensive program for the community.

Areas of Need

1. There is a lack of organizational coherence and communication, with a default to siloed work, leading to the duplication of services and yielding mixed, contradictory messages at the school level (e.g., Assessment is in Technology; Title III, Grants, and programs are in Finance Department).

2. The district is in a state of flux at every level and will require the type of district leadership that can steady and focus the district.

3. The district is working on structures, but there is very little evidence of a sense of urgency to address academic issues/performance, except the chief academic officer (CAO) and the CLDs.

4. There is a lack of clear, consistent, or coherent set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do.

5. The separation of the Assessment and Accountability departments has led to the inability to make data-driven decisions, use data to design/reform programs for curriculum and professional development.

6. Teachers are conflating the use of iReady and Wonders unit assessments; there is a lack of consistency using unit assessments.

7. There is no systemic data platform other than pilots.

8. There are no mechanisms/structures to use data other than cursory surveys for teachers and principals to give input prior to central office decision-making, especially when addressing professional development needs.

9. There are new EDs and CAO with many silos; there is angst around what as in place and what is to come with trepidation regarding the new superintendent. School choice seems to have been a focus has been at the district level with a need to "get back down to the teacher level" (no teacher cabinet/advisory group, teachers are not part of Learning Walks).

10. There is a lack of coherent, consistent structure or action plan for supporting personnel at sites The team heard that many staff do not have content knowledge/professional development support, report to different departments, have no communication protocols, do not have differentiated assignments, or do not have knowledge of how to use data effectively.

11. Special Education: There was no comprehensive document describing the referral and identification processes across the district, no monitoring of eligibility criteria and practices for years, and little integration of special education teachers - lack of support for co-teaching and minimal alignment to general education curriculum, materials, or professional development.

12. Teachers do not respond to surveys because there is no evidence of their voices being heard. They expressed the perception that they do not matter. Teachers feel overwhelmed because they don't know what is important and how to respond to student needs. Teachers feel "numb to district decisions" with so many changes without explanation or data.

13. CLDs are K-12 rather than being deployed based on their expertise. They shared that what elementary schools need is very different from secondary school needs.

14. LCDs may be overwhelmed because they are focused K-12 rather than a specific level (e.g., elementary and secondary). The described finding it hard to bring schools together around instructional focus and support - configuration is not productive.

15. There is a visible movement to reign in autonomous curriculum and instructional materials, but there is still a lingering mindset of autonomy.

16. Some divisions under the CAO have not bought into the movement towards a coherent and cohesive team around instruction (Learning Walks).

17. There is a strong push-pull between lead instructional coaches/lead teachers and content coordinators, and there appears to be a gap in content knowledge for teaching partners.

18. There is a push-pull between providing high-quality instruction and meeting SEL needs (see achievement data below)

    a. There is a disconnect between the work in the Professional Development department to the work of LCD and the Content Coordinators/Teaching Partners

19. The team observed that several in the leadership team do not have K-12 experience.

20. Principals reported:

    a. No alignment regarding how to support schools.

    b. The 'why' is not shared (i.e., data) or why principals have to do what they do.

    c. Expectations are clear but not the 'path' on how to get there.

    d. Unpacking standards is not structured.

    e. Principals identified a disconnect between learning directors.

    f. Teaching partners are generalists.

21. Systems are not in place for principals to request support ("too many layers"). There is also a history of retaliation that inhibits principals and teachers from asking for help or speaking up. Many expressed that the role of the site principal not clearly defined. Many expressed the need for an "operations director" to allow principals to focus on student achievement.

22. Divisions and departments are working with purpose but are not working together. For example, the content area coordinators and coaches do not work with the professional development division, leading to problematic agnostic professional learning/training that is not connected to content-specific pedagogies or materials.

23. There are no mechanisms at the district level beyond cursory surveys for teachers and principals to give input, participate in instructional or curricular design activities (e.g., textbook adoption, professional development content and structure), or request support (e.g., curricular resources, personnel assignments).

24. Principals and teachers expressed frustration that "a small group of people have been making decisions without feedback." Meaningful collaboration has not occured and there is little understanding of "why" those decisions been made.

25. Teachers and administrators are open to change but the lack of collaborative two-way communication has led to confusion and misdirection. For example, the discontinuation of an interim assessment structure the previous year without clear communication of what measure would replace these assessments led to wondering "if high-quality core instruction might not be the focus for the coming year."

26. Board of Education:

    a. There seemed to be a level of distrust among Board members and the superintendent (past and now a concern for the new superintendent).

    b. The Board has also made claims of unfairness and distrust the data that has been presented.

27. The district's curriculum documents or maps do not communicate a vision or expectations for precisely what is to be taught and at what level of rigor, nor do they provide strategies or examples to support the delivery of the content.

28. Instructional frameworks are not yet in place and there is minimal guidance, documents, or PD available to practitioners causing lack of rigorous, equitable instruction. Teachers are not teaching to the level of rigor of the standards, and there are no clear expectations. Teacher mindset determines rigor.

29. APS is implementing new curriculum and SEL at the same time leading to quality control concerns.

30. Curriculum is defined as the products you buy. Guides, standards alignment, etc. are decided building by building. The curriculum does not communicate vision, expectations, etc.

31. Currently, the adopted instructional materials (*Wonders, Bridges*), serve as a "curriculum buffet" with teachers unsure of the essential learning. Other missing elements include guidance for integrating social emotional learning with academic learning, expectations for student work, assessment strategies to guide differentiation, and examples of how to use supplemental resources and technology. The lack of clear curricular guidance can lead to

inequitable and ineffective instructional opportunities for students across classrooms and schools.

32. Curriculum documents and Standards-based PD is being developed externally, but interviewees expressed:

    a. A need to include teachers in the professional development planning,

    b. That developing curriculum documents is a form of PD, more valuable than outsourcing, and

    c. There is no guidance for intervention materials.

33. Ther is a need to develop comprehensive academic expectations that would be communicated district wide as course correction to previous autonomy.

34. There is a lack of clear Tier 1 expectations for student groups, especially in special education settings and for English learners.

35. The district's enacted Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is not clearly defined. There are varying degrees of understanding of the essential components of MTSS among leaders. The MTSS does not appear to relate back to Tier 1 core instruction, too quickly moving students to Tiers 2 and 3. The high percentage of English learners identified for special education services and African American students identified for behavior interventions are most likely indicative of an underperforming MTSS.

36. The eligibility and identification processes for special programs (i.e., special education and gifted and talented services) needs to be audited and calibrated to standardized criteria to avoid disproportional participation.

37. A system of multiple assessment measures and mechanisms/protocols to use actionable data is not in place to progress monitor and guide instruction. There is a singular, over-reliance on *iReady, Bridges,* and *Wonders* diagnostic and unit assessments without a common platform to collect and disseminate the data.

38. Several interviewees noted that the district professional development is mostly limited to the implementation of new instructional resources, i.e., "recipe-based" instruction, mirroring the textbook or other instructional materials.

39. Required professional learning sessions are not differentiated and do not account for prior knowledge or implementation status. For example, all school staff were required to attend the same orientation training to implement *Wonders*, yet some school sites have been using these instructional materials for several years.

40. There is a need to develop professional learning aligned to the role of the Learning Community Director and Principal that addresses their responsibilities as a supervisor (e.g., classroom observation metrics).

41. The districtwide initiative to establish a professional learning community at every site is hampered by a lack of professional development to address a data protocol, co-planning, or peer coaching model for principals, teaching partners, and classroom teachers.

42. There is a district preference for agnostic, rather than content-specific knowledge and pedagogies, evidenced in both the professional learning/training offerings and the assignment of teaching partners and instructional coordinators as "generalists." Without content-specific professional learning, teachers are less equipped to employ appropriate strategies to successfully address the most common misconceptions, most difficult concepts, most effective sequencing of concepts, relevant connections, and essential knowledge and skills of a particular content area.

Recommendations and Next Steps

This section contains the recommendations and proposals of the Council's Strategic Support Team to re-structure and augment the academic program. There are multiple issues listed in the Findings section and many, some long-term, recommendations are addressed below. These recommendations are specific to the identified foundational high priority needs to:

- Create organizational coherence,

- Build trust and a collaborate mindset,

- Accelerate the district's efforts to provide equity in learning,

- Design and implement standards-based, rigorous curriculum,

- Enhance instructional delivery and build teacher capacity, and

- Increase student achievement and well-being.

There may be a temptation to move through these proposals as quickly as possible. However, many of these recommendations involve transformational change, large in scale and scope, and some may be a significant change from the status quo. Some of the recommended next steps may be addressed in tandem and/or are described in detail as supporting another proposal. Do not let urgency be the enemy of purposeful, strategic, and high-quality work. Initially, identify no more than three initiatives/goals anchored in a theory of action. Too many goals at one time will fragment district resources and dilute the importance of the identified goals. Pay attention to the pace of change management – the district has experienced several recent changes in leadership and methodologies. The overarching goal should be to build trust within divisions, departments, and schools across the district. It will be critical to communicate the rationale for change and remain focused on aligning all actions to the identified goals.

Organization and Coherence

The singularly decisive recommendation from the Council's Strategic Support Team is to engage in a systematic and systemic change management process to identify, communicate, and implement a common agenda across departments and schools. Follow the recommendations below to use a "Theory of Action" model and embrace "simplexity:" take a complex problem, identify the smallest number of key components (the simple part) and make them gel (the complex part).

1. Identify initially no more than three initiatives/goals in service of student achievement to guide the work of the district. Typically, these initiatives would be identified by senior leadership, using data from the Learning Walks, student assessments (e.g., CMAS, PSAT, SAT), and staff surveys to determine areas of need.

2. Create a cross-functional team (including principal and teacher representation) led by the Chief Academic Officer to develop a specific, explicit, sequential Theory of Action related to each of the three initiatives. For each, identify criteria for the evidence of success and how success will be measured. Every subsequent action taken by the district should directly relate back to, and support, one of these initiatives. (see Appendices D, E – Theory of Action guidance articles).

3. Systematically and frequently communicate to all stakeholders WHY (the rationale) these initiatives were identified (i.e., based on data) and the desired results. It will be critical to communicate with specificity and transparency to build trust and model coherence. Use consistent and varied communication opportunities to build a sense of urgency and ownership for the achievement and outcomes of all students.

4. Turn the district's anchor initiatives/goals (supporting and/or related aims in service of the initial three) into a strategic plan that guides a multi-year strategy for implementing recommendations in this report for boosting student achievement. Within the plan, lay out the timing and sequencing of the implementation of the recommendations and agreed upon reforms. This should take multiple years to be done well and not rushed.

The arrival of the new Superintendent and anticipated and recommended reorganization of the central office structures have the potential to exacerbate challenges from disconnected initiatives, staffing assignments, stakeholder misperceptions, and instructional pedagogies. To build coherence and focus the direction of the district, examine and address the existing silos and duplication of offices/departments. Align the reorganization of the central office to the identified goals, implementation, and measurement elements of the newly adopted Theory of Action plan.

Effective change management requires consistent, clear, transparent communication: WHAT are the new structures (who is doing what), WHY the changes were made (compelling rationale aligned to the Superintendent's vision and current data), and HOW they will affect staff/stakeholders (e.g., reporting structures). Specific and transparent communication will foster the district's ability to control the message and desired change process.

Alignment, trust, and coherence begin with Superintendent of Schools and the Chief Academic Officer. They must share a unified vision for student success and uniformly communicate that vision and how the district will accelerate academic achievement for all students.

5. Critically examine structures (divisions and departments) to ensure the role of each is aligned to the district initiatives and eliminate duplication. Address the existing silos (groups of people working on the same objectives without collaboration or communication) evident in the departments of Professional Learning, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Special Education, and Multi-linguistic learners.

6. Consider realigning the schools assigned to each Learning Community Director to reflect his/her specific expertise and the unique needs of each level (i.e., grouping all high schools together).

7. Reassign operational responsibilities to a learning community operations director/specialist. This position would report to the LCD (or several LCDs depending on budget constraints) and work cross-functionally with Finance, Operations, and Human Resources and take ownership of all non-academic areas of learning community-based responsibilities. This position would provide one point of contact for principals for all operational needs and allow the LCD to focus more intently on teaching and learning (see Appendix H. Job Description - Birmingham City Schools). The Council team can provide alternatives to this structure if needed.

8. Require that the Learning Community Directors coordinate their instructional strategies. Provide targeted professional development for them on instructional standards, leadership, and instructional coaching. Design concrete goals for the academic improvement of schools within their network and hold them accountable for making progress on those goals.

9. The review/clarification of roles may require reorganizing departments within divisions such as moving the Department of Accountability from the Division of Technology to the Division of Equity in Learning to work alongside the Department of Assessment and Research more effectively. Establish clear and direct processes for communication and collaboration.

10. Establish a collaborative communication process between the Board of Education and the Superintendent to support their student outcomes-focused governance, including the sharing of data and what the data mean.

11. Recognize and prepare for push-back using the phases of team development model. (see for example Appendix I. Tuckman's Model of Team Development).

The district's work towards coherence and whole system success will be ongoing and evolve as the system examines data and identifies what works and results in measurable progress for all students. Two key levers/practices are emerging from this year's work and should underpin the goals identified in the district's Theory of Action (see recommendation #2 above in this section).

12. The first key lever is the new learning walk protocol that zeroes in on pedagogy – what teaching and learning practices are specifically effective. The institution of common metrics/rubrics that are level set, calibrated, and shared with principals communicates and clarifies expectations, identifies areas of need, and informs next steps. The *Instructional Practice Guide (Achieve the Core)* used this year by the district identifies key indicators of student and teacher behaviors that align to high-quality standards-aligned instruction. An additional resource, *Instructional Rounds Exemplar* may be used in conjunction with the *Guide,* providing a comprehensive approach that includes a protocol for an pre-brief for participants, classroom visit preparation, classroom visits, group de-brief, principal de-brief, and return visit/future support. (see Appendix J. Instructional Rounds Exemplar).

13. The second key lever, data-driven conversation, is facilitated, in part, by the first, using a learning walk protocol to focus on key strategies observed in real time that accelerate teaching and learning. Sharing visit data, inferences, and wonderings is a key component of a data-driven conversation. Other critical sources of data include common, standardized

interim/benchmark, and summative assessments. Data-driven conversations are foundational to successful professional learning communities. Implementing recommendation #1 under Accountability and Assessment will allow instructional leaders to collaborate more effectively with the departments of Assessment, Accountability, and Research to develop and disseminate data literacy tools for district and school leaders. (see Appendix K. Telling a Data Story).

14. Allow instructional autonomy in schools only if all student groups within a school are performing well. If gaps exist between student groups (e.g., low income students, students with disabilities, English learners, African American males, Hispanic females) in an individual school, autonomy cannot be earned until the performance of all student groups are consistently higher.

Curriculum and Instruction

A. Instructional Framework

An instructional framework should communicate a clear and unifying vision for high-quality school and classroom practice and the district's commitment to instructional equity and excellence. The framework should delineate grade-level instructional priorities (essential content and skills) while attending to unfinished learning/learning loss. The framework should guide teachers and leaders to ensure that grade-level content is accessible to all students, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and specialized instruction for English learners. The framework should also address and integrate the social-emotional needs and mental health of students. Moreover, a common framework can serve as a course correction for the past practice of instructional autonomy. Two Council of Great City Schools publications, *Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures* and *Addressing Mental Health and Social-Emotional Wellness in the COVID-19 Crisis* provide resources and examples to support the district's current review and restructure of an instructional framework.

1. Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, create a team of senior leaders (e.g., division and department leaders), principals, and teaching partners/teachers, including those who work with special populations (e.g., multilingual learners) and the MTSS department, to review and revise the current instructional framework and identify what classroom scaffolds within Tier 1 instruction should look like across schools and content areas including instructional strategies/moves.

2. The instructional framework should identify teaching practices and learning environments that are (1) standards-based, (2) evidence-based, (3) engaging, (4) differentiated, (5) culturally responsive, and (6) data-driven. (see Appendix L. Instructional Framework Exemplar).

3. Solicit and accept feedback: share the framework with principals and teachers, using the team members, especially site-based teachers, as ambassadors.

4. As the framework is being created, begin developing guidance for administrators to observe classroom instruction, indicating what they should look for in terms of appropriate instructional strategies. Align and link the current learning walk rubric to the practices described in the framework.

5. Content specialists should provide input and be able to communicate how the identified practices support content-specific instruction and how the strategies are deployed within a content-centered environment. Also, the revamped curriculum scope and sequence documents should reflect this guidance in greater detail (see subsequent Curriculum section).

6. To launch the new framework, select several (not all) practices to focus on for the school year. Design and structure professional development around the new framework (more on this in a subsequent section). Additional practices from the instructional framework can be introduced, with support for staff, in subsequent years as teachers and leaders are ready.

B. Curriculum

1. Establish a shared understanding of what "curriculum" is (listed below #5) and is not (a textbook or instructional materials).

2. Review, restructure, and enhance the current effort to develop content area curriculum documents. Transition from vendor-created or external documents to building capacity within the district for curriculum excellence and expertise. The new curriculum documents should define what Tier 1 high-quality, rigorous, standards-based English language arts and math instruction look like and what they do not look like at each grade level.

3. Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, begin with a few documents (one grade level each for English language arts and math) to revise the current curriculum maps to guide instruction using a cross-functional team approach (senior leaders, principals, content area specialists, instructional coordinators, teachers). Use teacher teams to build ownership of the revamped guidance; the object is not to tell teachers how to teach, but to provide clarity on what students should know from their teaching and equip teachers with the tools needed.

4. Ensure the district's content area specialists, especially in reading and math, are experts in their fields. Provide intensive professional development to upgrade their skills and expertise. These specialists (and their teams) should be the "go to people" for the multi-year curriculum reform work.

5. Anchor the curriculum guides in rigorous standards rather than the scope and sequence of the adopted textbooks. Keep in mind that textbooks are not the curriculum, but rather resources to support the curriculum.

6. Structure/base the team's development of the scope and sequence documents using the framework and criteria developed by the Council of Great City Schools: *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High Quality*

District Curriculum. Weave in the practices described in the district's newly created instructional framework. Adhere to the following curriculum document tenets:

   a. Be clear about what must be taught and at what depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level (unpacking standards).

   b. Build instructional coherence within and across grade levels consistent with college- and career-readiness standards for each grade level.

   c. Articulate explicitly standards-aligned expectations for student work at different points during the school year.

   d. Provide examples of rigorous tasks that require students to demonstrate the depth of knowledge and skills to complete specified tasks.

   e. Present samples of student work that illustrate the quality of work expected of students when they complete a unit.

   f. Embed scaffolds or other supports that address gaps in student knowledge and the needs of low-performing students, English language learners, and students with disabilities to ensure broad-based student attainment.

   g. Provide support to teachers in addressing unfinished learning as they work to meet grade level expectations.

   h. Include written links to adopted textbooks, materials, or digital applications to indicate where the materials are high-quality, where gaps exist and how to fill them to meet district expectations.

   i. Provide suggestions for the best ways to measure whether students have met learning expectations (formative and interim assessment tools).

7. Imbed social emotional learning (SEL) and identity development into trauma-informed instruction using diverse texts written by diverse authors, tasks where teachers can cultivate and strengthen relationships with students, and guidance to manage student discussions so that all voices are heard and honored. The English Language Arts planning guide exemplar (see Appendix M. English Language Arts Planning Guide) includes both SEL and identity/criticality instruction. A second exemplar, a history/social science lesson, illustrates transformative social emotional learning (T-SEL). (see Appendix N. Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics)

8. Take time to make sure this work is done well, not fast. Use the rubric developed by the Council of Great City Schools: *Curriculum Quality Rubric: A Self-Assessment Tool for Districts* to formatively assess the curriculum during the development and testing/pilot phases. Enlist teachers and schools to pilot the curriculum documents and provide feedback

prior to launching districtwide. Build in on-going feedback loops and make needed adjustments based on that input.

9. In subsequent years, build out the revisions and implement them across grade levels, supported by professional development so that teachers and administrators gain an understanding of the district's expectations.

Considerations for English Language Arts Scope and Sequence Documents (Appendix M. English Language Arts Planning Guide)

1. Build district knowledge of and promote the use of the *iReady Teacher Toolbox* which provides standards-based resources to introduce new concepts, reteach standards, and address unfinished learning.

2. Integrate English language development (ELD) standards within the grade-level ELA scope and sequence document.

3. Imbed examples of scaffolds for students with disabilities, English learners, and struggling students into the curriculum guide with examples of what students should be able to do at each proficiency level.

4. Design essential questions to help students build depth of knowledge on a specific grade level concept. Provide guidance to help teachers connect anchor texts, activities, and supplemental resources to the theme as they plan daily lessons.

5. Create thematic units that correspond to the standards, not driven by textbooks.

6. Include sample units and lessons that build on what students have learned in previous grades, especially phonics instruction in grades K-5 and writing instruction at all grade levels.

7. Include guidance on writing instruction that articulates best practices and how to assess student writing not only for formatting and conventions but for clear articulation of ideas. Include rubrics and exemplars of student writing.

8. Address the level of proficiency students are expected to demonstrate in reading comprehension on literary and informational text with guidance on text complexity (e.g., levels of meaning, syntax/structure, language, and knowledge demands).

9. Provide guidance on how to teach reading that addresses the needs of struggling students, English learners, students with disabilities to build fluency and comprehension of grade-level texts and academic vocabulary.

10. Incorporate and leverage topic or theme-based text sets that are aligned to grade-level standards to augment *Wonders*.

11. Review current instructional materials/resources for cultural relevance, identify gaps, and reference support materials to address those gaps.

Considerations for Math Scope and Sequence Documents (see Appendix O. Bridges in Mathematics Unit Guide Exemplar)

1. Begin with a clear vision for strong mathematics teaching that includes purpose-driven work, offering rich and meaningful tasks, promoting equitable discourse, encouraging questioning and curiosity, and valuing diversity.

2. Be explicit in identifying what needs to be taught and address the depth of knowledge students are expected to attain in these areas in each grade level.

3. Use a progression of standards document as the frame. Lay out the progression of concepts, knowledge, and skills across and within grade levels. Identify what students have learned in previous grades and how that learning connects to standards/objectives in the current grade level.

4. Provide clarity in what is expected and what is needed to minimize misconceptions and misunderstandings.

5. Specify what levels of proficiency students are expected to demonstrate in their classroom work, tasks, and assignments at different points throughout the school year to be on-track to meet grade-level expectations. This guidance should include performance targets for each unit with annotated exemplars of student work, and guidance on how to move students to the next level.

C. **High School Progression Framework**

1. Create a high school progression framework that gives students and parents/guardians a snapshot of required courses for graduation, identifies options for more rigorous courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, honors), career technical education (CTE) courses, elective courses, and programs for special populations offered in the district. Publish a course selection guide that can be used by counselors, students, parents/guardians to map out the high school coursework experience.

2. Develop a vertical articulation sequence to ensure accelerated courses in middle school set students up for entry and success in advanced high school courses.

3. As pathways (multiyear sequences of courses that integrate academic and technical knowledge, skills, training) are developed and mature, include them in the course selection guide.

Assessment and Accountability

1. Move the Accountability Department from the Division of Technology to the Division of Equity in Learning to work alongside the Department of Assessment and Research more effectively and avoid duplication of roles and responsibilities. Consider creating a direct reporting line between the department and the superintendent to ensure that data and reports are not filtered before reaching the superintendents desk.

2. Adopt a districtwide data management/platform system that supports monitoring student progress, data sharing and analysis, program evaluation, and links to the district's MTSS. This may be an expansion of the district's current use of eduCLIMBER.

3. More clearly define the use of *iReady* as a publisher-diagnostic assessment. Provide professional learning for the LCDs to deepen their understanding of *iReady.*

4. As the curriculum guides are being revised, begin the process of revising/creating benchmark assessments so that they align to state standards and the rigor of the new curriculum. Consider requiring the administration and collection of data from these benchmark assessments from all schools that have not earned autonomy based on the performance of all student groups. Include open-ended items. The aggregated data can be used by content area specialists (curriculum leads) and assessment specialists to make appropriate decisions about student success and weakness on the standards and inform curriculum revisions.

5. Standardize assessment practices across learning communities to determine systemwide more accurately if students are on track to meet grade-level expectations. Ensure that the assessments align to the standards and rigor of the revised curriculum guides.

6. Include beginning and intermediate English learners in the revised benchmark assessments. This may include a portfolio approach at grade-level that allows them to demonstrate their content knowledge while learning English.

7. Embed in curriculum and/or instructional framework documents the source and role of diagnostic, interim, and summative assessments and identify required data to be uploaded to a central platform.

8. Develop an assessment calendar that identifies required and optional assessments (e.g., *iReady, Wonders* and *Bridges* units, benchmark, Advanced Placement, state CMAS assessments).

9. Prioritize developing assessments internally rather than using vendor products and metrics. Often, these vendor assessments do not reflect the rigor of the standards at each grade level or align to the district' curriculum.

10. Develop and disseminate a data protocol for looking at student work and progress monitoring. Provide teaching partners with professional development to support their role at schools and leading PLC data discussions.

11. Create or obtain from schools, anchor papers of student work that illustrate the rigor expected by the district to support PLC discussions.

Professional Development

1. In concert with the development of the new instructional framework and curriculum documents, create a multi-year professional learning plan/calendar for teachers and leaders. Align the plan to the three initiatives the district has identified and add on in subsequent years. Be strategic: correlate the professional learning sessions with the deployment of the framework and scope and sequence documents.

2. Use data from the learning walks, interim, and summative student assessments to guide and prioritize the development of professional learning.

3. Include teachers/teaching partners, principals, and community directors in the planning from the start to build ownership and commitment to the results. This collaborative work must go beyond surveys; teacher voice as the "practitioners" is integral to the planning.

4. While designing professional learning and trainings, adhere to the following features discussed in detail in the Council's publication: *Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining High-Quality Professional Development*.

    a. A focus on content – how to teach specific content and how students learn that content in conjunction with the materials that are being used in the classroom. Discipline-specific, content-focused professional development supports teaching and learning within the classroom context as opposed to generic professional learning delivered externally or divorced from school or district context.

    b. Support for collaboration – teachers need opportunities to discuss instructional innovations with colleagues and address issues that arise when implementing new instructional approaches.

    c. Feedback and reflection – build in time to ensure teachers can think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice. Effective feedback provides teachers a clear vision of success and an accurate assessment of their strengths and challenges in meeting expectations.

    d. Personalized coaching and support – effective coaching is characterized as individualized (one-on-one), intensive (at least every couple of weeks), sustained (throughout a semester or year), and focused (deliberate practice on specific skills) with an observation and feedback cycle.

5. Provide clarity to stakeholders about how the roll out of professional development is aligned to the district's strategy to boost student outcomes and build staff capacity.

6. Differentiate the professional development by role and job required proficiency, not "one size fits all." Consider the background experience, prior training, expertise, and needs of individual roles (teachers, principals, learning community directors). For example, some sites and teachers have previous experience with *Wonders* and do not need the orientation training; Learning Community Directors need to know what to look for during observations/learning walks. Consider assigning content area specialists to each LCD to increase their instructional knowledge and help translate what is expected from the central office to the school site.

7. Scale Lexia LETRS training to all K-5 teachers.

8. Focus on unpacking standards, creating rigorous tasks aligned to the standards, and addressing misconceptions when designing professional learning. Teachers need content expertise to support their instructional delivery.

9. Provide special education and general education teachers collaborative professional learning to strengthen inclusion and co-teaching practices.

10. Consider transitioning current content-agnostic/generalist teaching partners and instructional coordinators to content-specific coaches who are experts in content pedagogy and strategies.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

1. Establish leadership teams at the district, regional, and campus levels to oversee MTSS implementation. Establish clear roles and responsibilities for teams at each level. For the district team, identify a representative sample of individuals representing central office units directly and indirectly supporting equitable literacy (and other academic areas as desired) and positive behavior and social-emotional supports. Include personnel with roles related to the improvement of teaching/learning for all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, students with emotional/behavioral disabilities, etc. Follow the same process for establishing regional and campus level MTSS teams and identify the staff who will support these teams across the district.

2. Articulate a definition of the district's MTSS that is shared with all academic departments, LCDs, deans, and principals. The emphasis should be on strong Tier 1 instructional and behavioral systems and ensuring that interventions relate back to Tier 1 instruction.

3. Critically examine disaggregated data around disproportionality within Tiers 2 and 3, especially focus on Hispanic and African American students.

4. Build in multiple steps and supports within Tier 1 to minimize the disproportionate referrals of English learners with normative language development and African American students with behavior concerns to Tier 2 and 3 systems.

5. Create a dashboard to capture what steps have been taken prior to referring a student to the LCD for Tier 3 services.

6. Create a communication system/process for sharing information at the site level for the deans who attend the Culture and Climate Academy and their site principals.

7. Create a protocol document to guide site-based MTSS teams.

Special Populations

1. Audit the eligibility criteria and process for special education services and placements.

2. Create a comprehensive document describing the referral and identification processes for special education and gifted and talented services across the district.

3. Design professional development for administrators and teachers to change the culture and climate so that students with disabilities are perceived as needing general Tier 1 instruction and behavior supports first so that staff takes full ownership of all students being served in the district. Include training to support "least restrictive environment" placements.

4. Ensure that dually identified students (English learners and students with disability) receive daily English language development instruction.

5. The curriculum revisions addressed previously should include revamping English language development documents that align to the English language arts curriculum.

Cautions and Considerations

The Aurora Public Schools district has experienced a significant amount of change in recent years, including reorganization and shifts in positions. In response, there is a level of cultural mistrust, aligned to the forming and storming phases of team development described in Appendix I. Tuckman's Model of Team Development. The following maxims have provided invaluable guidance, support, motivation, and fortitude to your colleagues in the education community who share your commitment to the success of all students.

- **Go slow to go fast**: balance urgency with diligence and quality.

- **Explain the "why":** communicate the rationale (cite data) and how the change will address the problem and impact staff and students.

- **Be intentional about strategic abandonment**: when everything is important, nothing is important.

- **Practice empathy**: elevate "teacher voice" and be open to feedback.

- **Trust the process:** prepare for push-back and leverage the stages of change management.

- **Follow your North Star:** align your decisions and actions to the district's mission and vision.

- **Celebrate the small wins**: successive small wins lead to greater accomplishments!

Links to Council of the Great City Schools Resources

Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum

Curriculum Quality Rubric: A Self-Assessment Tool for Districts

Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining High-Quality Professional Development

Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures

Addressing Mental Health and Social-Emotional Wellness in the COVID-19 Crisis

Robin Hall

Dr. Robin Hall is the Chief of Schools/Director of Literacy for the Council of the Great City Schools. She keeps members informed about research on systems and successful strategies for improving student achievement. Dr. Hall also provides support for the development and dissemination of information and tools to implement college- and career-readiness standards. She has served in various capacities for Atlanta Public Schools, including Executive Director of K-8 schools, Principal, K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, Instructional Liaison Specialist, Language Arts Department Chairperson, and high school language arts teacher constituting over twenty-five years of educational experience. Dr. Hall has also served on the Council of Great City Schools support teams in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and professional development.

Dr. Hall received her B.A. degree in English from Vassar College and received her M.A. degree from Clark Atlanta University. She also earned her Doctor of Arts in Humanities degree from Clark Atlanta University.

Farah Assiraj

Farah Assiraj is the Chief of Teaching and Learning for the Council of Great City Schools. She is an equity-centered leader with 20+ years of service in urban schools. She recently served as the Deputy Chief Academic Officer for the Boston Public Schools (BPS) where she supported all academic departments and led the district's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) strategy to redefine equitable tiered supports, services, data, and professional learning. She also served as the Office of English Learners Assistant Superintendent where she developed and implemented a systemic action plan for implementing bilingual education which served as a blueprint for raising achievement for English learners. In other BPS roles, Farah led the district in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and research; developed guidance and professional development for language and literacy and adopted K-12 district instructional materials.

Ms. Assiraj has a B.A. degree in Sociology; a M.A. degree in Linguistics; holds a Leadership Certificate and is completing a Ph.D. in Research and Evaluation in Education.

Diane Quisenberry

Dr. Diane Quisenberry has served as a teacher, curriculum specialist, assistant principal, director of education, school principal, human resource director and university professor. She has diverse skills and experiences collaborating in environments such as state and federal correctional institutions, public and private schools, and international universities in Ohio, Texas, Georgia, and South Korea. Dr. Quisenberry possesses a wealth of knowledge and experience in curriculum mapping, analyzing data, urban education, school reforms, research, evaluation,

special education, and fostering instructional leaders. She is passionate about mentoring and empowering others who wish to promote academic and social excellence in students and educators.

Dr. Quisenberry earned an undergraduate degree in Special Education, a master's degree in Corrections, and a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership.

Jermaine Dawson

Dr. Jermaine Dawson is the Chief Academic and Accountability Officer for the Birmingham City Schools. Throughout his career, he has held a variety of leadership positions, serving as a teacher, principal, and district-level administrator. In addition to his role in Birmingham City Schools, Dr. Dawson has worked in some of the nation's largest urban school districts, including Houston Independent School District, Duval County Public Schools, and Atlanta Public Schools. In recognition of his contributions to the field of education, he has received numerous awards and honors, including his recent selection in the inaugural cohort of the Michael Casserly Executive Leadership Institute for Aspiring Superintendents. Additionally, he was one of forty educators in the world selected in 2017 to participate in the International Global Cities Conference in Paris, France to represent America on the international stage with other educators from around the world. Dr. Dawson has a deep commitment to improving educational opportunities for young people from all backgrounds, especially those who are furthest from justice.

Dr. Dawson earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Morehouse College; a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Kennesaw State University; and a doctorate in Educational Leadership at Northcentral University.

Cathy Martin

Dr. Cathy Martin served as the Associate Chief of Academics for Denver Public Schools. In her senior leadership roles, she led the development of academic supports and resources across content areas and worked closely with colleagues to bring equity-based practices to all content-area classrooms. She also previously served as the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for three years and as the K-12 Director of Mathematics for twelve years in Denver Public Schools. Dr. Martin has taught middle school and high school mathematics in Texas, Virginia, and Colorado and was a Presidential Awardee in Secondary Mathematics in 2000. She co-directed a National Science Foundation-funded project that supported school leadership teams across five states in implementing standards-based mathematics instruction. She was an associate editor for the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Journal, *Mathematics Teacher: Learning and Teaching PK-12*.

Dr. Martin earned a B.S. in Chemistry and Science at Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls; a M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum Learning and Technology, both at the University of Colorado at Denver.

Pamela Seki

Pamela Seki served as Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development for the Long Beach Unified School District. She has 35+ years of experience in K-12 and adult education. In her role as Assistant Superintendent, she supervised all curriculum content areas and services, English Learner Services, Migrant Education, and Teacher Induction. She designed and implemented comprehensive professional learning plans for teachers, leaders, and classified staff, including the development of an innovative, asynchronous, personalized professional learning platform funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Ms. Seki was a founding member of the California Office to Reform Education (CORE), leading the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in the state' larger urban districts. She began her educational career as a high school Spanish and English language development teacher and established and taught the first Spanish heritage language program in the district. She instituted the first-in-her -state Khmer heritage language program.

Ms. Seki earned a B.A. in Spanish at California State University, Long Beach, a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Administrator/Leadership Certification at the University of La Verne. She also studied contemporary Mexican literature at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

APPENDIX B. DISTRICT PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

Mark Seglum, Interim Superintendent
Christie Imholt, District Policy Advisor
Jeff Park, Executive Director of Autonomous Schools
Jeremy Jimenez, Executive Director, Student Success
Zach Rahm, Executive Director, Curriculum & Instruction, Gifted & Talented
Marquetta Thomas, Executive Director, School Performance
Nia Campbell, Chief Academic Officer
Stephanie Mason, Vice President, Board of Education
Debra Gerkin, President, Board of Education
Anne Keke, Director, Board of Education
Wondame Davis, Director, Behavior Systems Support
Linnea Reed-Ellis, President, Aurora Education Association
Rachel Browning, Executive Director, Exceptional Student Services
Jennifer McCammon, Director, Exceptional Student Services
Becky Hanley, Director, Exceptional Student Services
Heather Stewart, Learning Director, Blueprint and Magnet Schools
Garrett Rosa, Learning Director, Southwest Learning Community
Karen Powell, Learning Director, Northwest Community
Cynthia Cobb, Director, Early Childhood Education
Julie Branning, Instructional Coordinator, Elementary Literacy
Jenny Bigbey, Instructional Coordinator, Elementary Literacy
Kyle Reutter, Instructional Coordinator, Secondary Literacy
Pamela Willamson-Rybolt, Instructional Coordinator, Secondary Literacy
Ken Jensen, Instructional Coordinator, Secondary Mathematics
Beth Joswick, Instructional Coordinator, Elementary Mathematics
Jennifer Sheldon, Director, Professional Learning
Liz Fitzgerald, Professional Learning
Larry Irvin, Director, Professional Learning
Marne Gulley, Lead Instructional Coach
Jacqui Kurz, Teacher on Special Assignment, Read Act
Lindsey Burris, Lead Content Coach
Ashlee Saddler, Director, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
Jill Ruiter, Executive Director, Aurora Public Schools Foundation
Amy Beruan, Director, Federal Programs and Grants
Brian Duwe, Principal, North Middle School
Kirsten Weidmair, Principal, William Smith High School
Ran Jung, Director, Avenues Program
Kelsey Haddock, Principal, Aurora Quest K-8 Magnet School
Jennie Todd, Principal, Laredo Elementary School
Chris Capron, Principal, Murphy Creek P-8 School
Jenn Dichter, Principal, Vaughn Elementary School
Stacey Stewart, Principal, Vassar Elementary School
Kimberley Pippenger, Principal, Virginia Court Elementary School

Jessica Abel-Pype, Principal, Dalton Elementary School
William Gayhart, Teacher
Cheyanne Jones, Teacher
Amber Scott, Teacher
Kelli Williams, Teacher, Murphy Creek P-8 School
Carrie Cohen, Teacher Murphy Creek P-8 School
Cara McCarthy, Teacher, Vaughn Elementary School
Jessica Cross, Teacher, Pickens Technical College
William Hall, Teacher, East Middle School
Maya Martin-Glenn, Director, Assessment
Kevin Riebau, Director, Learning Resources

APPENDIX C. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- *APS 2026: Faces of the Future*
- Aurora Public Schools Organizational Charts
- Behavior Data – Referrals, Suspensions
- Literacy Diagnostic Report – Attuned Education Partners
- Multilingual Learners Enrollment
- DoEL Organizational Assessment
- Exceptional Student Services Evaluation and Placement Data
- 2022-23 Personnel in FTE
- Instructional Resource Materials, Programs, and Instructional Tools, K-12
- Curriculum Maps, K-12 (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science)
- Title III Expenditures, 2021-23
- APS Special Education Handbook
- Evaluating an ELL for Special Education
- Alternative Language Program Framework
- CLDE Master Plan

Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)
Strategic Support Team Visit

Aurora Public Schools
Interview Schedule
April 17 - April 20
Educational Services Center, Bldg 2
15751 E 1st Ave
Aurora, CO 80011
Vygotsky Conference Room

Day 1 (4/17/23)

Time	Activity	Participants
6:30 PM	Kick off Dinner Chophouse – 3000 E 1ˢᵗ Ave	Mark Seglem, Christie Imholt, Jeff Park, Jeremy Jimenez, Zach Rahn, & CGCS Team

Day 2 (4/18/23) [Zoom Link]

Time	Activity	Participants
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	~~Meeting with Interim Superintendent~~	~~Mark Seglem (Not Available)~~
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Meeting with Chief Academic Officer	Dr. Nia Campbell
9:45 AM – 10:30 AM	Meeting with Board of Education	Director Mason
10:30 AM – 11:15 AM	Meeting with Board of Education	Director Gerkin
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	**BREAK**	
11:15 AM – 11:45 AM	Meeting with Executive Director Student Success & Behavior Systems Support	Dr. Jeremy Jimenez & Wondame Davis
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	Meeting with President of teachers' union	Linnea Reed-Ellis
12:15 AM – 1:15 PM	Meeting with Board of Education	Director Keke
1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	**LUNCH**	
2:15 PM - 3:15 PM	Meeting with Executive Director/Assistant Director for Special Education Video call link: https://meet.google.com/cww-qzcn-vma Or dial: (US) +1 385-645-7084 PIN: 535 829 260#	Rachael Browning(Virtual), Jennifer McCammon, Becky Hanley

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM	**BREAK**	
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Meeting with Executive Director of School Performance and Learning Community Directors	Marquetta Thomas, Heather Stewart, Garrett Rosa, Karen Powell

Day 3 (4/19/23) [Zoom Link](#)
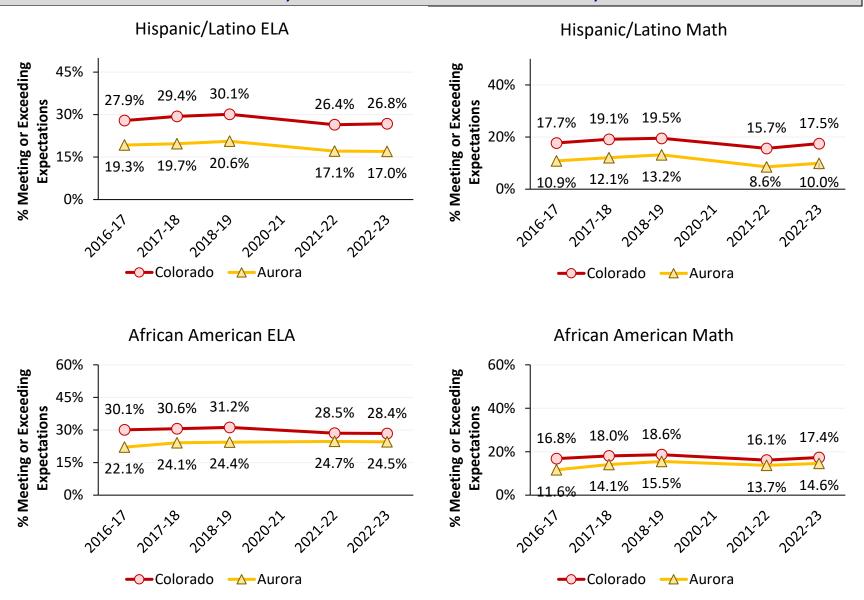
| Time	Activity	Participants
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Curriculum Gifted/Talented	Dr. Zach Rahn
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Early Childhood	Cynthia Cobb
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	**BREAK**	
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Persons in Charge of reading/language arts	Julie Branning/Jenny Bigbey (Elem) Kyle Ruetter/Pamela Willamson/Rybolt (Secondary)
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Persons in charge of mathematics	Ken Jensen/Beth Joswick
11:00 AM - 11:30 AM	Persons in Charge of Professional Development	Jennifer Sheldon/Liz Fitzgerald/Larry Irvin/Shawn Roloff
11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Mathematic Coaches	Jennifer Sheldon/Coaches - Mary Kelly, Marne Gulley, Jacqui Kurz, Lindsey Burris, and Liz Fitzgerald
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	**LUNCH**	
1:00 PM- 1:30 PM	Meeting with RISE	Veronica Palmer
1:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Meeting with APS Foundation	Jill Ruiter
2:00 PM - 2:30 PM	Director of Federal Programs	Amy Beruan
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	**BREAK**	
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	Focus Group Principals Virtual: zoom link Or in person	Brian Duwe Shelli Skroch-Straushein Kirstin Weidmaier Ran Jung Kelsey Haddock Kim Pippenger Chris Capron Nelson Van Vranken Jessica Abel-Pype Stacey Stuart Jennifer Dichter Jennie Todd
3:45 PM – 4:45 PM	Focus Group Teachers	William Gayhart Cheyanne Jones Amber Scott **Murphy Creek**: Kelli Williams, Erin Henry, and Carrie Cohen **Vaughn**: Elizabeth Lile and Cara McCarthy **Vista Peak Exploratory**- Ashley Inman, Fifth-grade literacy, Afinman@aurorak12.org & Michael Gray, Eighth Grade math,
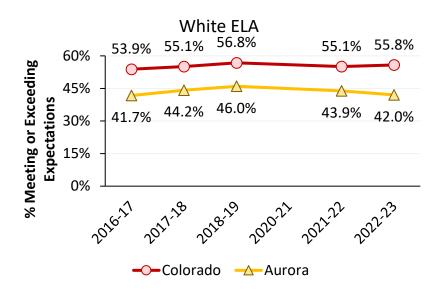
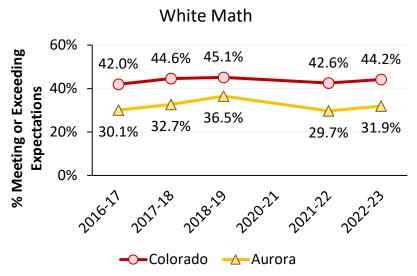| | | mgray@aurorak12.org
Pickens Tech- Jessica Cross
East - William Hall (Math), Julia Smith-Noble (Math), Jennifer Gutierrez Sanchez (Math), Kevin Olson (Literacy), Megan Marchant (Literacy), Corey Ryan (Literacy) |

Day 4 (4/20/23) – Wrap Up Zoom Link
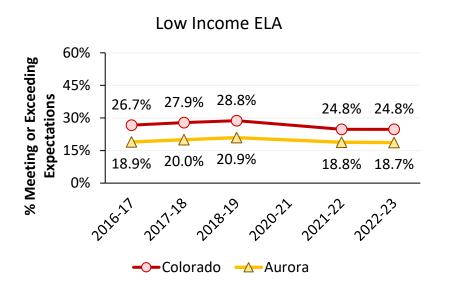
Time	Activity	Participants
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Focus Group Parents Virtual (Zoom Link) or In-Person (ESC 2)	**Montview:** America Puerto Borjas (303) 641-0107 Email: Americapuerto7@gmail.com Leirinah Ieremia (720) 461-7146 Email: lieremia04@yahoo.com Jasmine Valdez (303) 961-7204 Email: jasminevaldez01@gmail.com Thomas Borden (719) 629-6915 Email: taborden@gmail.com Veronica Marquez Bolanos (720) 499-9638 Email: veronicamarquez65@gmail.com Ashley Glode (412) 606-0908 Email: aeglode@hotmail.com **Arkansas:** Yoselin "Joe" Tario 303.562.8283 Lacey Abedl-Khaliq 720.380.1818 Pat Cox 720.280.3563 Isaac Ramos 720.628.1905 Cassandra Croom 720.318.6643 Jyona Moore 720.427.0319 Janeth Alvarez Correa 303.570.0395 **Vaughn:** Shannon Nowak- 509.218.5179 Email: 999Octobers@gmail.com Cintya Rojas- 720.280.6833 Email: cintyarojas2127@gmail.com
	Debrief	CGCS Team
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Debrief with Interim Superintendent	Mark Seglem

Hispanic/Latino ELA

Colorado: 27.9% (2016-17), 29.4% (2017-18), 30.1% (2018-19), 26.4% (2021-22), 26.8% (2022-23)
Aurora: 19.3% (2016-17), 19.7% (2017-18), 20.6% (2018-19), 17.1% (2021-22), 17.0% (2022-23)

Hispanic/Latino Math

Colorado: 17.7% (2016-17), 19.1% (2017-18), 19.5% (2018-19), 15.7% (2021-22), 17.5% (2022-23)
Aurora: 10.9% (2016-17), 12.1% (2017-18), 13.2% (2018-19), 8.6% (2021-22), 10.0% (2022-23)

African American ELA

Colorado: 30.1% (2016-17), 30.6% (2017-18), 31.2% (2018-19), 28.5% (2021-22), 28.4% (2022-23)
Aurora: 22.1% (2016-17), 24.1% (2017-18), 24.4% (2018-19), 24.7% (2021-22), 24.5% (2022-23)

African American Math

Colorado: 16.8% (2016-17), 18.0% (2017-18), 18.6% (2018-19), 16.1% (2021-22), 17.4% (2022-23)
Aurora: 11.6% (2016-17), 14.1% (2017-18), 15.5% (2018-19), 13.7% (2021-22), 14.6% (2022-23)

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White ELA

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Colorado	53.9%	55.1%	56.8%		55.1%	55.8%
Aurora	41.7%	44.2%	46.0%		43.9%	42.0%

White Math

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Colorado	42.0%	44.6%	45.1%		42.6%	44.2%
Aurora	30.1%	32.7%	36.5%		29.7%	31.9%

Low Income ELA

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Colorado	26.7%	27.9%	28.8%		24.8%	24.8%
Aurora	18.9%	20.0%	20.9%		18.8%	18.7%

Low Income Math

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Colorado	17.0%	18.0%	18.4%		14.4%	15.4%
Aurora	11.1%	12.5%	13.7%		9.9%	11.3%

SWD ELA

SWD Math

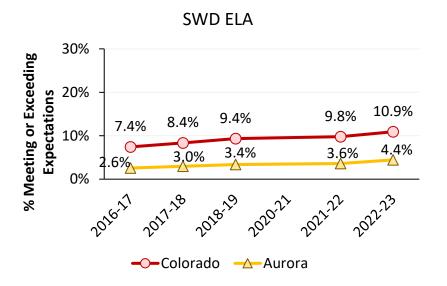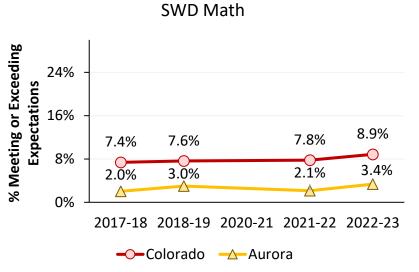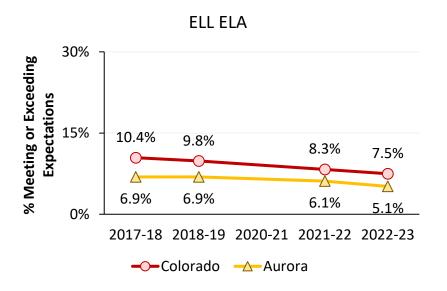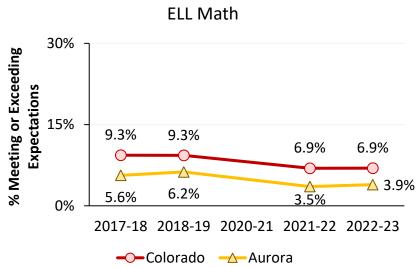## ELL ELA

ELL Math

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APPENDIX F. WHAT IS A THEORY OF ACTION AND WHY DO WE NEED ONE?

Adapted from Harriett Rasmussen for Principal Supervisors

A wise colleague once noted that even the most researched strategy is no better than your best bet.

However certain you may be, you will not truly know if it works until you try it. So, until it is proven – in your context, and with your teachers and leaders – it is still at best (or worst) a guess. A theory.

Another wise colleague noted that there is nothing as practical as a good theory!

This is the first point: that strategy is a guess, and that there is some theory behind a decision to use one particular strategy over another. Having a theory of action that accompanies a strategy requires that you have articulated a rationale behind the strategy.

It makes good sense to think through a decision to choose one action over another, and even better sense to make this thinking public. This thinking, your rationale, is, in short, your theory of action.

For example, why do you think that having more frequent and more planned sessions with principals will help the quality of your feedback? Why do you think that sharpening your coaching skills with principals will help you have better conversations?

A theory of action is, at its core, a simple IF, THEN statement. IF I have more frequent and focused sessions with principals, THEN principal practices will improve. IF I hone my own coaching skills, THEN principal practice will improve.

But do you note something amiss with these statements? They are pretty general and there is not really any linkage between the IF statement and the THEN conclusion. For example, it is a pretty big leap to imagine that just by increasing the time principal supervisors meet with principals, principal learning will increase or if principal supervisors improve their coaching skills, principal practice will improve. And yet this theory is in play in settings.

This is the second point about a theory of action: its power lies within the specificity of thought, in the explicit reasoning that calls attention to essential steps and checkpoints. If this is left unstated, it is far too easy to just put a new strategy into place and, during implementation, miss critical elements that will render a good idea, such as engaging in more robust classroom observation, a success or failure when it comes to impacting student learning.

Here is how a more explicit theory of action related to supporting principals might look: IF I ... dedicate focused, planned time to work with principals we will develop a more trusting relationship and be able to learn from each other; and if I sharpen my coaching skills (asking vs. telling) I will better understand the various ways principals are thinking about identifying and solving problems of student learning , how they are acting on the feedback they receive, and how they coach and work with teachers THEN principals will better understand, plan for and enact ways of working with teachers that engage them in deeper thinking and reflection about their practice and the impact on teaching and learning Then teachers will be able to reflect on and articulate their strengths, challenges and learning goals and make changes in their practice to increase impact on student learning

experiences.

So that students ...

What this example shows is that any strategy is a sequence of strategic actions, and that each action must have an associated rationale (or theory).
Why is this important? Because if you are not clear on what each element is intended to produce, you will not be able to test whether your theory was correct, and it is entirely possible that you will get down the road and decide
that your strategy is not having the desired effect.
While it may be that the strategy was ineffective, it is just as possible that one element was not implemented quite the way you expected, or that you needed to tweak something in the middle.

But a theory of action that specifies what is expected to happen establishes a clear path toward the goal of impacting student learning. It becomes a set of checkpoints to make sure that the expected outcomes are realized at each step along the way.
This is the third point and perhaps the most important: strategies, because they are the best bets, need to have regular and specific checkpoints so that you are able to test the theory behind the actions as they are underway. A sequential theory of action, as in the example above, offers proof points that can suggest whether or not you are on the right track. Theories of
action should be written in pencil. If it is doing its job, your theory of action will be revised and adapted to reflect your learning as you follow the predicted and actual events of implementing your learning.

So, what is a theory of action? Your best thinking made explicit. Your rationale for choosing one strategy over another. Your predicted course of action with identified checkpoints and evidence that it is working, or not.

Why do you need one? Because even the best ideas can fall flat when we enter that perilous place called implementation. And our students rely on our diligence to make sure that our best bets are working for them.
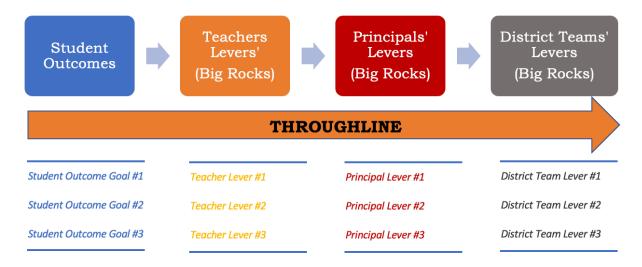
Adapted from Harriette Thurber Rasmussen, *What's a Theory of Action and Why Do We Need One?*
https://www.htrconsulting.org. 2020-06-18.

CREATING A ROADMAP TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS

THEORY OF ACTION

DEVELOP A THEORY OF ACTION TO GUIDE THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT TEAMS IN SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

| Student Outcomes | Teachers Levers' (Big Rocks) | Principals' Levers (Big Rocks) | District Teams' Levers (Big Rocks) |

THROUGHLINE

Student Outcome Goal #1	Teacher Lever #1	Principal Lever #1	District Team Lever #1
Student Outcome Goal #2	Teacher Lever #2	Principal Lever #2	District Team Lever #2
Student Outcome Goal #3	Teacher Lever #3	Principal Lever #3	District Team Lever #3

Birmingham City Schools

Job Title   Learning Community Operations Specialist

Job Type   Administrative Position – Other

Job Description

Birmingham City Schools is implementing a new model of school support, innovation, and transformation with the creation of Learning Community Operations Specialists. While the Learning Community Operations Specialist works closely with and reports to a designated Instructional Superintendent, he/she will also work cross functionally with Finance, Operations, Human Resource, and take ownership of all non-academic areas of learning community-based administration. This will provide principals within a learning community one point-of-contact for all operational requests and will provide Instructional Superintendents the opportunity to support school leaders and the schools' instructional program versus operational matters that have historically dominated their time.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership
- Oversee, manage, and coordinate all operational functions of the learning network excluding discipline.
- Serve as a key member of the Instructional Superintendent's Leadership Team.
- Function as a problem solver and a liaison between schools and the district in all non-academic matters.

System Design
- Create and improve systems for all operational aspects of the learning community and the school (technology, maintenance, calendar, procurement, front office management/customer service, student files/enrollment, communication, building use, operational emergencies, personnel matters, etc.).
- Think strategically, anticipate problems, and implement solutions around systems for all aspects of operations.

Relationship Management
- Support all school front offices to become stakeholder responsive and to provide first-rate customer service.
- Manage all day-to-day operations of the learning network office.
- Manage relationships with custodial services and facility support staff.
- Manage relationships with finance and procurement staff.
- Manage relationships with HR and employee relations staff.

Operations
- Ensure the creation and/or maintenance of systems and procedures to increase the efficiency of operations in the learning community and the schools within the learning community.
- Design and oversee quarterly scheduling process.
- Coordinate set-up for all state-mandated testing, with school testing coordinators and with guidance from the Executive Director of Assessment.

Finance/Procurement
- Work with facility/operations manager to provide schools regular status updates of requests.
- Immediately troubleshoot problems that may arise.
- Ensure proper functioning and maintenance of the heating, electrical, plumbing, roofing, and other building systems in collaboration with district operations staff.
- Coordinate and uphold building safety systems in case of fire, lockdown, or other emergencies.
- Design and oversee tracking systems of school property including copiers, computer, fax machines, furniture, etc.

Human Resources
- Work as a liaison with HR to fill school-based vacancies.
- Work with an agent of HR to investigate allegations of corporal punishment, abuse, or allegations of unprofessional conduct of employees.

Instructional Superintendent and Principal Support
- Assist the Instructional Superintendent with troubleshooting, planning visits to the school, etc.
- Complete projects as directed by the Instructional Superintendent or Principal.
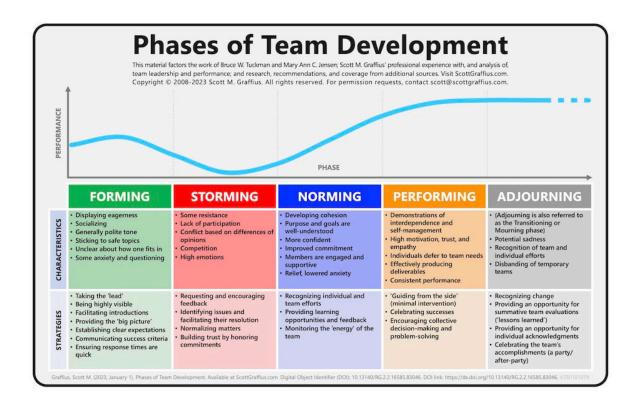
Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

A. Required Qualifications:
- B.A. required (education, business, management, or related area).
- 3 years of administrative support experience.
- Must have expert skills in Excel and other database applications.
- Must have strong attention to detail and demonstrate a commitment to accuracy.
- Management time and priorities to accomplish multiple vital tasks in a limited time frame.
- A growth mind-set focused on learning and continually improving.

Graffius, Scott M. (2023, January 9)
Https://scottgraffius.com

1. Forming

Characteristics of Forming include displaying eagerness, socializing, generally polite tone, sticking to safe topics, unclear about how one fits in, and some anxiety and questioning.

Strategies for this phase include taking the 'lead', being highly visible, facilitating introductions, providing the 'big picture', establishing clear expectations, communicating success criteria, and ensuring response times are quick.

2. Storming

Traits of Storming include some resistance, lack of participation, conflict based on differences of opinion, competition, and high emotions.

Strategies for this phase include requesting and encouraging feedback, identifying issues and facilitating their resolution, normalizing matters, and building trust by honoring commitments.

3. Norming

Features of Norming include purpose and goals are well-understood, more confident, improved commitment, members are engaged and supportive, relief (lowered anxiety), and developing cohesion.

Strategies for this phase include recognizing individual and team efforts, providing learning opportunities and feedback, and monitoring the 'energy' of the team.

4. Performing

Characteristics of Performing include high motivation, trust, and empathy; individuals defer to team needs; effectively producing deliverables; consistent performance; and demonstrations of interdependence and self-management.

Strategies for this phase include 'guiding from the side' (minimal intervention), celebrating successes, and encouraging collective decision-making and problem-solving.

5. Adjourning

Typical traits of adjourning (also referred to as Transitioning or Mourning) include potential sadness, recognition of team and individual efforts, and disbanding.

Strategies for this phase include recognizing change, providing an opportunity for summative team evaluation ('lessons learned'), providing an opportunity for individual acknowledgements, and celebrating the team's accomplishments – which may involve a party and possibly an after-party.

K-8 Collaborative Inquiry Visit Protocol
2014-2015

Purpose: To reinforce and learn from classroom efforts related to the full implementation of the Common Core State Standards (K-12) and Linked Learning (High School) and to collaborate on the key strategies, systems and actions being used to achieve school goals with a focus on teaching and learning. To learn from one another and discover successes and innovations that are positively impacting student learning.

Logistics: This walk-through process will be conducted in teams that include Principals (hosting and visiting), Assistant Principals, Curriculum Leaders, Teacher-Leaders (hosting and/or visiting) and District supervisory and/or support staff with visits to all classrooms.

Visit Protocol

Up-briefing with ALL participants (20 minutes)
- Host Principal shares highlights of school data and key strategies, systems and actions being used to improve teaching and learning at the site with a focus on the work of the site's Instructional Leadership Team.
- Host Principal and/or site Teacher-Leaders share highlights of the site professional development efforts from August to present.

Classroom Visit Preparation with ALL participants (10 minutes)
- Host Principal shares any specific areas of focus related to the K-12 Literacy Implementation Plan. The Host Principal will explain the specific expectations that have been communicated to staff in relation to the walk-through focus areas.
- Host Principal shares the teams created for the collaborative walk-through.

Classroom Visits with ALL participants (up to 1 hour)
- Prior to entering classrooms, small walk-through groups will converse about what they expect to see and attempt to calibrate on the rating scale.
- Walk-through participants will visit all classrooms (elementary), English, History and Science classrooms (middle and high school) in small teams (2-4 participants per team) seeking positive examples of implementation efforts.
- Participants will collect data on the implementation data collection tool by plotting the degree of implementation observed on the continuum (e.g. one dot per classroom) and related evidence notes in the evidence column.

Group De-briefing and Summary Charting with ALL participants (up to 20 minutes)
- Upon return from classroom visits, participants will plot their visit data on a summary chart, creating a visual illustration.
- Either small groups or individuals will share a summary of evidence collected and inferences generated to add to the summary chart.
- The participating group will have an opportunity to pose wonderings and/or open-ended questions to place on the summary chart and will conclude the whole-group portion of the visit by creating a celebratory visual representation that may be shared with staff.

Principal De-briefing with Host/Visiting Principals only
- As a walk-through team, Principals will complete the "next steps" column of the Summary Chart and discuss any collaborative efforts that might be supportive of the next steps.

Return Visit/Future Support
- Host Principal returns a copy or photo of the Summary Chart to his/her support provider.
- District supervisory staff may arrange to visit a staff meeting or write a statement of support that can be published to positively reinforce the school's efforts.

Collaborative Inquiry Visit
Data Collection Template

Evidence observed or gathered:
1= not observed at this time, 2 = little/no evidence at this time, 3 = some evidence at this time, 4=several examples of implementation observed, 5 = multiple examples of implementation observed and this classroom practice is in place

Area/s of Focus	Findings	Evidence/Examples of Quality in Implementation
U1. Continued study and application of the CCSS and their learning progressions, supported by the Linked Learning approach, lead to high quality instruction using appropriate scaffolds when needed to ensure all learners meet expectations.		
In today's lesson, teachers and students showed understanding by... • Aligning lessons to the depth of the CCSS by targeting a set of grade level CCSS/Literacy Standards, including a clear and explicit purpose for instruction, and by placing high quality text(s) at the center of the lesson. • Addressing the key shifts in CCSS: building knowledge through a balance of literature and informational text; reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence; and a focus on academic vocabulary. • Responding to varied student learning needs, integrating appropriate supports for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well-below the grade level text band, and providing extensions for students who read well-above the grade level text band.	1 2 3 4 5 ◄──────────►	
U2. Regular practice with complex text helps students to develop the mature language skills and the conceptual knowledge they need in order to effectively respond to that text orally and in writing.		
In today's lesson, teachers demonstrated understanding by... • Establishing purpose for reading a complex text, and modeling how an expert reader makes meaning. • Providing scaffolding and close reading instruction to guide students through complex texts. • Creating opportunities for collaborative conversations with peers to refine their understanding. • Challenging students to independently read increasingly complex texts. • Using formative assessment opportunities to determine next steps in instruction.	1 2 3 4 5 ◄──────────►	

U3. Preparation and participation in effective collaborative conversations allow individuals to build on others' ideas and express their own clearly.

In today's lesson, students demonstrated understanding by... • Being thoroughly prepared for discussions, having read or studied the required material and drawing on that preparation to explore ideas under discussion. • Effectively following set behaviors and norms for discussion. • Effectively engaging in conversations by clearly exploring original thoughts, asking insightful questions, listening attentively and respectfully to others, and appropriately challenging others' ideas and opinions. • Effectively synthesizing ideas discussed and explaining their new ideas in light of the conversation. • Demonstrating accurate knowledge and speaking effectively about the topic. In today's lesson the teacher demonstrated understanding by... • Actively participating, observing conversations, and collecting evidence, to reteach or redirect as needed.	1 2 3 4 5	

U4. The strategic use of formative assessment strategies allows teachers and students to collect the best possible evidence about where students are in the learning and use the information to decide what to do next.

In today's lesson, teachers and students showed understanding by... • Being clear about the learning intentions and success criteria. • Providing feedback focused on the learning target and to determine next steps. In today's lesson the teacher demonstrated understanding by... • Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning. • Regularly collects evidence of student learning. In today's lesson, students demonstrated understanding by... • Responding to feedback. • Acting as instructional resources for one another. Reflecting on their own learning, setting goals, and planning next steps.	1 2 3 4 5	

Questions, Wonderings and Celebrations:

Potential Next Steps:

"Telling a Data Story"
The Importance Using Evidence in Improvement Practices

Cara Jackson, PhD, Abt Associates

Akisha Osei Sarfo, PhD, Council of Great City Schools

asarfo@cgcs.org

Improvement Strategies
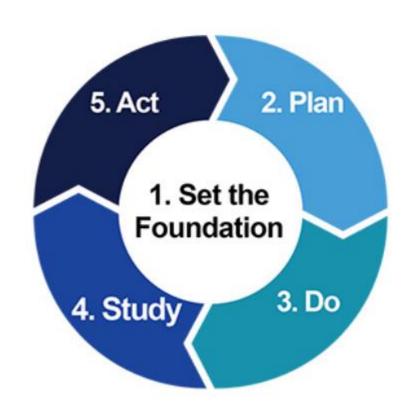
o What's your approach?

   o Recognize or Identify Problem
   o Establish a Plan for Improvement
   o Set Goals
   o Execute Plan
   o Measure and Evaluate
   o Act on Findings
   o Repeat

Does your district/department engage in formal improvement practices or policies?

At which point in this cycle does your district struggle the most?

Tracking and Measuring Progress

o Measure and Evaluate

  o What picture does your data story tell?

    o Your data picture should help inform improvement and instructional practices by helping users understand the problem, gaps in performance, trends in performance over time, differences in outcomes and significant indicators that influence outcomes.

  o What data points/measures are available to you?

    o There are various measures of academic progress that can be used to inform improvement. A balanced assessment system helps inform differences and challenges with student learning and monitors student progress towards graduation and college and career readiness.

  o Which data points are you using in your improvement strategies?

    o Using multiple data points and triangulating data sources helps tell the whole story of student progress.

Balanced Assessment Systems

o A balanced assessment system includes large-scale, screening/benchmark and classroom level assessments that work in coordination, providing actionable data to inform instruction and ensure all students can access and engage in grade-level content. Foundational to the system are classroom assessments, which should occur most frequently and have the strongest impact on day-to-day instruction.

o In a balanced assessment system, different types of assessments are used for specific purposes, providing timely and actionable information to the appropriate stakeholders.
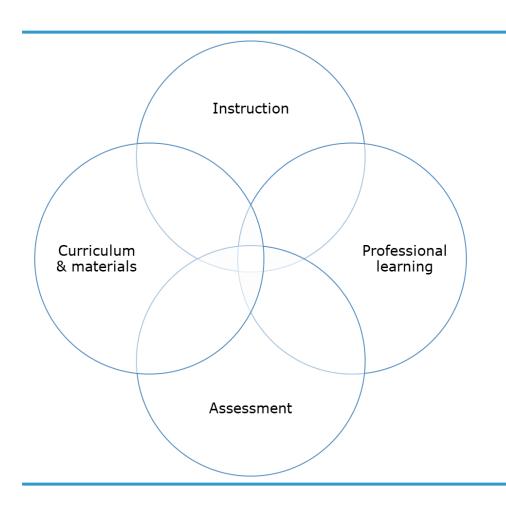
The Rest of the Story

o While using measures from a balanced assessment system is central to your story you must also consider

    o Other qualitative indicators that influence student learning

        o Interviews, focus groups, or surveys of students, parents, and families can help inform instructional practices, barriers to learning, and systemwide policies that influence student and school experiences.

    o Context

        o Understanding the current political and social contexts is also critical to improvement practices and telling your data story.

Data for improvement

Exploring math outcomes:
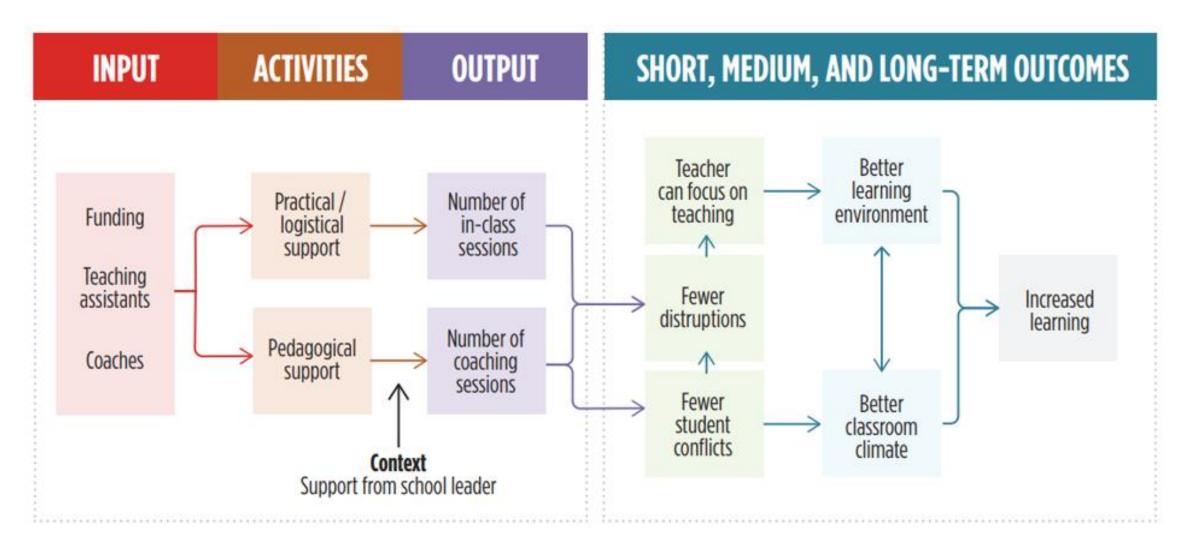
Did students receive all instructional content?

Has the district adopted evidence-based curriculum?

Do all classrooms have sufficient materials?

Does data suggest areas that might benefit from additional professional learning?

Do students have equitable access to advanced instruction?

| INPUT | ACTIVITIES | OUTPUT | SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES |

Funding

Teaching assistants

Coaches

Practical / logistical support

Pedagogical support

Context
Support from school leader

Number of in-class sessions

Number of coaching sessions

Teacher can focus on teaching

Fewer distruptions

Fewer student conflicts

Better learning environment

Better classroom climate

Increased learning

THEORY OF ACTION

THEORY OF CHANGE

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District data collection & use

o Accountability for the process and transparency about inputs & activities

o Performance monitoring 👁 👁

o Evaluate initiatives/programs based on collective input
  o What decisions could be informed by answers to questions?
  o Leverage existing data to answer **actionable** questions

School data collection & use

o Encourage teachers to observe each other's classes, engage in lesson study – teach a common lesson, discuss strengths and areas for growth

o Equity check:

    o Which students are accessing advanced instruction?

    o Are students who could benefit from tutoring receiving it?

    o What supports, outreach, and communication with families might be necessary to help students take advantage of opportunities?
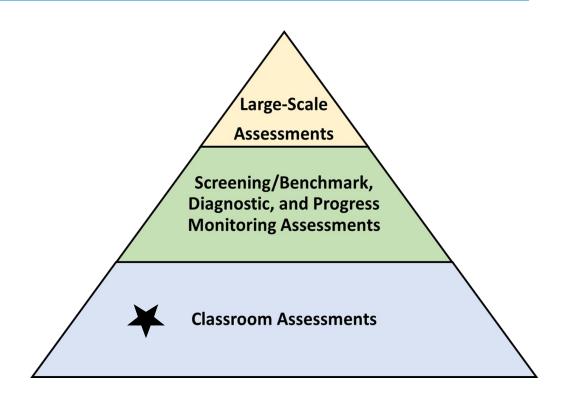
Teacher data collection & use

o Are teachers using benchmark and interim assessments to improve instruction?

o Asset-oriented error analysis: what steps did students get right? How can we build on that?

Large-Scale Assessments

Screening/Benchmark, Diagnostic, and Progress Monitoring Assessments

★ Classroom Assessments

Thank you!

Cara Jackson
Senior Associate at Abt Associates
cara_jackson@abtassoc.com

Akisha Osei Sarfo
Director of Research at the Council of the Great City Schools
asarfo@cgcs.org

APPENDIX L. INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK EXEMPLAR

Understandings & Expectations
FOR QUALITY CORE INSTRUCTION

Since the transition to the Common Core Standards, the LBUSD Understandings have been used to describe effective classroom practices and elements of pedagogy desired across all LBUSD classrooms and based on the LBUSD Foundational Belief:

> *All students and communities come with cultural and linguistic assets and deserve to be treated with dignity, fairness, respect and unconditional positive regard. In a warm-demanding learning environment, every student matters and needs to feel that they do. All students can learn and achieve at high levels, and we have a responsibility for their success. Confronting our own bias is important work for us to do if we are to truly set high expectations for all students.*

The new Understandings and Expectations for Quality Core Instruction were developed in alignment with the foundational belief and in response to new learning related to equitable instruction, the impact of Transformative Social-Emotional Learning, and meeting the needs of Multilingual learners, and are aligned to the LBUSD Equity Vision as stated in the LBUSD Excellence and Equity Policy (2021):

> *LBUSD celebrates the unique gifts and cultural experiences that our students bring to school. In our schools, students shall be nurtured and treated with respect. All staff commit to practices that achieve excellence and equity in educational experiences for all students.*

The current Understandings and Expectations support culturally responsive educators in using an asset-based approach to create equity-centered classrooms. This document describes the six understandings, or agreements, that comprise Quality Core Instruction and are integral for creating equitable and inclusive learning environments.

> *Quality Core Instruction (QCI) is the operationalizing of our expectations and belief in ALL students; the public demonstration of what we mean by excellence in every classroom and the environment where every student experiences our commitment to equity. QCI includes curricula, teaching practices and learning environments that are standards-based, evidence-based, engaging, differentiated, culturally responsive and data-driven.*

Since it is difficult to observe or measure a person's "understanding," this tool includes research-based practices that could be observed, indicating a level of understanding. While it is not a tool that captures every classroom practice in an LBUSD teacher's toolkit, it is an overarching expectation of what classroom instruction should look like across our schools in order to prepare students for post-secondary and career options as outlined in the LBUSD Graduate Profile. Above and beyond academic proficiency and meeting graduation requirements, LBUSD students will become:

College and Career-Ready Scholars

Critical and Innovative Problem Solvers

Adaptable and Productive Citizens

Ethical Decision Makers

Effective Communicators and Collaborators

LONG BEACH
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Excellence & Equity

2022
Understandings & Expectations
◆ ◆ ◆ AT A GLANCE ◆ ◆ ◆

Understanding 1: Planning Standards-Aligned Content

Purposeful planning, through an asset-based lens, provides access to standards-based grade-level content while acknowledging student profiles and needs.

Practice 1: Plan a unit of standards-aligned content using district-adopted materials and curriculum guides.

Practice 2: Plan for differentiated instruction for all learners based on student readiness, learner profile and interest.

Practice 3: Plan daily lessons that provide access to on-or-above-grade level content, including scaffolds and supports, while maintaining the rigor of the standard.

Understanding 2: Equitable Instruction

Equitable instruction ensures that all students can engage in learning experiences that build knowledge and skills leading to conceptual understanding of content, transfer to new contexts and the building of critical consciousness.

Practice 1: Deliver lessons and facilitate experiences guided by clear learning intentions.

Practice 2: Provide opportunities for students to build conceptual understanding that leads to knowledge transfer.

Practice 3: Help students achieve an in-depth understanding of the world and build critical consciousness.

Understanding 3: Student Engagement

Purposeful engagement increases student motivation, interest and meaning-making to develop a deeper understanding of content.

Practice 1: Create the social and emotional conditions to cultivate high levels of student motivation and interest.

Practice 2: Use active participation strategies to provide varied opportunities for students to interact with and reflect on the content.

Practice 3: Promote collaborative meaning-making through academic discourse.

Understanding 4: Evidence of Student Learning

Formative and summative assessment data used to monitor and adjust instruction provides feedback, motivates the learner and leads to student mastery.

Practice 1: Use formative evidence drawn from the student's knowledge, understanding and skills to inform teaching. (Assessment for Learning).

Practice 2: Use summative evidence of student learning to assess growth toward mastery of standards. (Assessment of Learning)

Practice 3: Guide students to assess and monitor their own learning. (Assessment as Learning)

Understanding 5: Collective Efficacy

Effective instructional teams (any team that meets regularly for the purpose of learning together to increase student achievement) embody a culture of collective efficacy and believe that their combined actions will move students towards equitable access and mastery.

Practice 1: Establish the conditions, structures and purpose for working and planning as a collaborative learning team.

Practice 2: Create learning cycles where teams analyze data, set goals, research and learn best practices, implement new learning, and reflect on implementation to plan the next steps.

Practice 3: Embody the belief that the collective responsibility for the success of all students lies with the team, and therefore, all members are accountable.

Understanding 6: Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environment

Equity-centered classrooms affirm student identities, cultivate a sense of belonging and develop student agency in safe learning environments where students thrive.

Practice 1: Create a student-centered physical environment that affirms student identities and promotes academic support.

Practice 2: Co-create a safe and welcoming community that centers caring relationships by valuing diversity, trust and respectful communication.

Practice 3: Communicate and model high expectations aligned to the belief that all students can achieve high levels of success if given the necessary support, regardless of identity and past performance.

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U1 Understanding 1: Planning Standards-Aligned Content

Purposeful planning, through an asset-based lens, provides access to standards-based grade-level content while acknowledging student profiles and needs.

Practice 1: Plan a unit of standards-aligned content using district-adopted materials and curriculum guides.

◆ Co-plan units in vertical and/or grade-level teams that support all students' access to and mastery of grade-level content.

◆ Engage in standards studies including a task analysis of the standards within each unit.

◆ Design instruction using LBUSD Best Instructional Practices (i.e. Math, ELA, HSS, Science, FRS).

◆ Arrange curricula into developmental progressions of subject matter to facilitate students' content learning and language acquisition.

◆ Integrate real-world applications of content standards into unit plans.

Practice 2: Plan for differentiated instruction for all learners based on student readiness, learner profile and interest.

◆ Gather multiple forms of data to create a robust student profile inclusive of language, culture, social-emotional and academic readiness that inform the instructional plan.

◆ Differentiate the content, process, product and/or learning environment to ensure all students achieve success.

◆ Incorporate student interests into the curriculum by providing opportunities for students to choose or propose their own ideas about the process, content and product while ensuring it remains aligned with the learning intention.

Practice 3: Plan daily lessons that provide access to on-or-above-grade level content, including scaffolds and supports, while maintaining the rigor of the standard.

◆ Develop lessons using complex texts and tasks, and planning for strategic support as students engage in productive struggle.

◆ Anticipate common misconceptions and supports that students may need to access and engage with the complex text and task.

◆ Plan daily supports for English learners to access the content and extend opportunities to interact in meaningful ways, understand "how language works," and address foundational skill gaps through integrated and designated English Language Development.

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U2

Understanding 2: Equitable Instruction

Equitable instruction ensures that all students can engage in learning experiences that build knowledge and skills leading to conceptual understanding of content, transfer to new contexts and the building of critical consciousness.

Practice 1: Deliver lessons and facilitate experiences guided by clear learning intentions.

◆ Communicate or assist students in uncovering the learning intentions (i.e. content being learned, success criteria, relevance).

◆ Provide explanations of how learning intentions fit within the learning progression and new contexts.

◆ Refer to learning intentions and success criteria throughout the lesson, encouraging students to monitor their own progress.

Practice 2: Provide opportunities for students to build conceptual understanding that leads to knowledge transfer.

◆ Use content, which includes the topics, facts and skills related to a discipline, to investigate relationships among concepts.

◆ Require students to analyze varied points of view and perspectives to explore or reflect on their own thinking.

◆ Develop a progression of questions, from factual to conceptual, to engage students in analytical and evaluative thinking.

◆ Guide students to create connections between and among concepts, and refine those connections through further questioning and analysis.

◆ Design new contexts and situations for students to transfer their conceptual understanding.

Practice 3: Help students achieve an in-depth understanding of the world and build critical consciousness.

◆ Integrate current, local, social, economic and political events into the curriculum to foster students' civic responsibility and agency.

◆ Encourage students to identify and examine social and political issues that pertain to the discipline which they are learning.

◆ Engage students in critically analyzing how language is used in relationship to power structures.

◆ Examine complex issues, such as inequity, bias and discrimination, and encourage students to propose solutions.

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U3 Understanding 3: Student Engagement

Purposeful engagement increases student motivation, interest and meaning-making to develop a deeper understanding of content.

Practice 1: Create the social and emotional conditions to cultivate high levels of student motivation and interest.

◆ Begin each learning experience with a welcoming and inclusive activity/routine that builds community or connects to the work ahead.

◆ Allow students to share different perspectives and ensure all student voices are heard and valued.

◆ Build on students' assets to connect what they already know to new content.

◆ Encourage interactions that affirm identity, increase a sense of belonging and build agency.

Practice 2: Use active participation strategies to provide varied opportunities for students to interact with and reflect on the content.

◆ Use interactive strategies, such as jigsaw, four corners, gallery walk, give one/get one/move on, etc., that allow student movement and processing of the content.

◆ Embed strategies throughout the learning experience, such as brain breaks and transition techniques, to regain focus and enhance creativity.

◆ Design experiences that optimize student output, allowing them to describe their thinking to others orally, visually and in writing, within each lesson.

◆ Facilitate opportunities that maximize the number of students responding simultaneously (e.g. wait-time, whiteboards, think-pair-share).

Practice 3: Promote collaborative meaning-making through academic discourse.

◆ Ask rigorous and discussion-worthy questions that require students to share, discuss and challenge one another's thinking.

◆ Allow students to collaborate with other students often to discuss the learning, communicate ideas and support a point of view.

◆ Listen carefully to determine students' conceptual understanding of content.

◆ Elicit and sequence responses strategically for small or whole group discussions.

◆ Position students as authors of ideas who must critique and challenge others' ideas while extending and justifying their own thoughts.

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U4 Understanding 4: Evidence of Student Learning

Formative and summative assessment data used to monitor and adjust instruction provides feedback, motivates the learner and leads to student mastery.

Practice 1: Use formative evidence drawn from students' knowledge, understanding, and skills to inform teaching. (Assessment for Learning)

◆ Elicit and gather evidence of student learning at strategic points during instruction (i.e. directions, procedures, process, questions and content).

◆ Use multiple approaches that require students to consistently explain and justify their thinking and reasoning to monitor students' understanding.

◆ Respond to evidence of student learning to plan next instructional steps including differentiated scaffolds.

Practice 2: Use summative evidence of student learning to assess growth toward mastery of standards. (Assessment of Learning)

◆ Communicate a view of learning in which assessment helps students learn better, rather than just achieve a better mark.

◆ Accurately interpret assessment data for all students, including those with special needs, English learners at various language acquisition levels and other historically underrepresented groups, to design personalized goals and interventions.

◆ Use summative data to determine the impact of Tier I instruction.

◆ Draw on multiple data sources to design and implement equitable grading practices that reflect student progress.

Practice 3: Guide students to assess and monitor their own learning. (Assessment as Learning)

◆ Co-construct learning goals using multiple data points to encourage student reflection, growth and development.

◆ Craft feedback that is focused and related to the learning intentions.

◆ Expect students to act on feedback that moves their learning forward to allow for the revision and resubmission of work.

◆ Provide multiple opportunities for students to provide peer support and interact as instructional resources for one another.

◆ Share timely, understandable and respectful information about student progress and achievement with students and caregivers.

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U5

Understanding 5: Collective Efficacy

Effective instructional teams (any team that meets regularly for the purpose of learning together to increase student achievement) embody a culture of collective efficacy and believe that their combined actions will move students towards equitable access and mastery.

Practice 1: Establish the conditions, structures and purpose for working and planning as a collaborative learning team.

◆ Co-create team structures by establishing norms and roles, and using agendas and collaborative protocols.

◆ Develop team collaboration through productive debates, working constructively on issues until they are resolved.

◆ Communicate in open and balanced ways while ensuring contributions from members are recognized and utilized.

◆ Accept that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning and explore strategies to manage the discomfort.

◆ Share classroom experiences and instructional expertise to enhance team productivity, development and mutual respect among the team.

◆ Deepen the understanding of how personal experiences fit into the larger school context of power and privilege while considering missing perspectives.

Practice 2: Create learning cycles where teams analyze data, set goals, research and learn best practices, implement new learning, and reflect on implementation to plan the next steps.

◆ Examine multiple forms of data, including analysis of inequities, to better understand the current state.

◆ Identify common learning goals for students based on prioritized data that focuses on historically underrepresented groups, and create related team learning goal(s) focused on student achievement of goals.

◆ Learn new knowledge and skills, reflect on established best practices and develop team plans to implement common instructional practices.

◆ Apply the acquired learning related to common instructional practice in the classrooms while engaging in ongoing team feedback to monitor and adjust implementation.

◆ Reflect on the effectiveness of common instructional practice, using several forms of evidence, to plan for the next team learning cycle and to scale successful practices school-wide and beyond.

Practice 3: Embody the belief that the collective responsibility for the success of all students lies with the team, and therefore, all members are accountable.

◆ Collaborate with colleagues, administrators, parents/guardians and educational professionals to ensure the success of historically underrepresented groups.

◆ Prioritize the best interests of students, especially when making difficult decisions.

◆ Increase the interdependence around common priorities, transparency of practice and the co-construction of curriculum as a result of continued success.

◆ Encourage team members to implement new learning while holding each other accountable for the decisions made by the team.

◆ Attribute student success to collective team actions propelling the expectation that continued gains are attainable.

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U6

Understanding 6: Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environment

Equity-centered classrooms affirm student identities, cultivate a sense of belonging and develop student agency in safe learning environments where students thrive.

Practice 1: Create a student-centered physical environment that affirms student identities and promotes academic support.

◆ Display materials that honor students' communities and their many identities, including racial, gender, linguistic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

◆ Ensure learning spaces include student-accessible visuals, scaffolds, tools and resources that support the success of all students.

◆ Arrange the classroom to enhance discussion and interpersonal relationships between teacher and student, and among students.

◆ Display student work, instructional resources and learning intentions that are aligned to the standards and reflect high expectations.

Practice 2: Co-create a safe and welcoming community that centers caring relationships by valuing diversity, trust and respectful communication.

◆ Recognize, affirm and build on a student's cultural knowledge, skills and abilities as assets.

◆ Refer to students by their identified gender pronouns and name, and ensuring consistent use.

◆ Co-construct community agreements, norms, routines and procedures that guide respectful interactions.

◆ Model and maintain positive and productive relationships.

◆ Facilitate opportunities for students to learn about their own culture while developing competence in engaging with other cultures.

◆ Create academic safety by encouraging risk-taking (i.e. normalize challenges by framing them as learning opportunities).

Practice 3: Communicate and model high expectations aligned to the belief that all students can achieve high levels of success if given the necessary support, regardless of identity and past performance.

◆ Engage in the ongoing reflection of personal cultural bias to examine the influence of how students experience high expectations and levels of success.

◆ Empower students through meaningful and relevant learning opportunities to develop agency and the belief that they can positively affect change through their voice and actions.

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Sample ELA Lesson Guide

Examples of the "Considerations for English Language Arts Scope and Sequence Documents", listed in the Report on pages 8-9.

Long Beach Unified School District

1. Design essential questions to help students build depth of knowledge on a specific grade level concept. Provide guidance to help teachers connect anchor texts, activities, and supplemental resources to the theme as they plan daily lessons.
   See Lesson Guide page 1 (Weekly Essential Question); page 2 (Build Background/Introduce the Concept)

2. Include sample units and lessons that build on what students have learned in previous grades, especially phonics instruction in grades K-5 and writing instruction at all grade levels.
   See Lesson Guide pages 7–8 (phonics instruction).

3. Include guidance on writing instruction that articulates best practices and how to assess student writing not only for formatting and conventions but for clear articulation of ideas.
   See Lesson Guide pages 9–10 (Genre Writing Process and Grammar).

4. Address the level of proficiency students are expected to demonstrate in reading comprehension on literary and informational text with guidance on text complexity (e.g., levels of meaning, syntax/structure, language, and knowledge demands).
   See Lesson Guide page 4 (Questions to Build Deeper Understanding/Use Evidence)

5. Provide guidance on how to teach reading that addresses the needs of struggling students, English learners, students with disabilities to build fluency and comprehension of grade-level texts and academic vocabulary.
   See Lesson Guide pages 3–4 (Vocabulary Strategies and Academic Vocabulary Routine)

6. Imbed social emotional learning and identity development into trauma-informed instruction using diverse texts written by diverse authors, tasks where teachers can cultivate and strengthen relationships with students, and guidance to manage student discussions so that all voices are heard and honored.
   See Lesson Guide "Transformative Social Emotional Learning" and Equity Notes throughout the guide.

7. Imbed examples of scaffolds for students with disabilities, English learners, and struggling students into the curriculum guide.
   See page 4 "Coach's Note".

8. Incorporate and leverage text sets to augment *Wonders*.
   See pages 1, 5.

Reading and Responding to Build Knowledge/Conceptual Understanding

Unit Big Idea Essential Question: How do we decide what's important?

Week 3
🎯 Weekly Essential Question: What can people do to bring about a positive change?
Culturally Responsive Essential Question: What can you do to bring about positive change in your community?
Culturally Responsive Essential Question: How can groups work together to make sure that progress benefits all?
Concept Focus: activism

Build Background/Concept	Comprehension Through Close Reading & Use of Evidence	Knowledge Building/Volume of Reading
Introduce EQ through text/videos/discussion • Weekly Videos to build background • Wonders Weekly Concept Video - *Take Action* Introduce Weekly Vocabulary • Vocabulary Slide Deck Key Vocabulary: anticipation, defy, entitled, neutral, outspoken, reserved, sought, unequal	**Close Reading of Complex Text** • "Rosa" (Wonders p.298-314) • "Rosa" Culturally Responsive Lesson ❤️ **EQUITY NOTE:** *McGraw-Hill has created a set of targeted and meaningful culturally responsive lessons for key weeks and anchor texts from the Wonders literacy program to assist in efforts to create classroom environments that value equity, inclusion, diversity, social justice, and anti-racism.* 🌟 **Coach's Note:** *If you choose not to use this grade-level complex text, select a text that aligns to the weekly/unit concept building around accountability for actions that may impact others when faced with a challenge.*	**"Frederick Douglass"** (Wonders Shared read p.266-269) "Our Voices, Our Votes" *Culturally Responsive Lesson* (Wonder Paired Text p. 232-235) Wonders Leveled Readers • "Jane Addams: A Woman of Action" Newsela Articles- • Rosa Parks exhibition presents civil rights hero in her own words • Civil Rights Activists: Claudette Colvin • Notorious Victoria: the first woman to run for president • The Abolitionists: Frederick Douglass • Women champions for reform in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

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❤️*EQUITY NOTE:*

Responding as a critical educator means that you consider your class, their identities and needs, and choose additional resources to best support their growth and progress as learners.

- What ideas or messages about this topic do I bring to the class?
- Are there any students that have experienced or are experiencing identities that are emerging for themselves or new to others?
- How can this learning help students to think about themselves or others?
- What could it look like to engage students in thinking about the societal structures that impact the topic?
- Do I understand how my students make sense of the information presented?

🌎 Family and Community Communication Notes:

As you prepare for this week of instruction, you may wish to communicate out to families and communities (e.g. parent/guardian letter) that students will be discussing the concept of activism and bringing about positive change. This week they will be reading about several people who worked for change to improve their lives. They will investigate different ways that people can take action and bring about positive change.

Quality Core Components	Instructional Guidance/Resources

Build Background/Introduce Concept Routine: Provides students with a foundational opportunity to engage in the essential question of the week and unit, and the vocabulary necessary to access text and concepts. Inviting students to actively discuss, question, and share ideas about the concept through the support of a text, video, image is a way to welcome students into the learning that will take place throughout the week. This is formative for the teacher to help plan and adjust instruction.
 	
 ❤️**Equity Note: Transformative Social Emotional Learning (T-SEL)** The SEL Signature Practices are a way to incorporate Transformative Social Emotional Learning (T-SEL) opportunities throughout the day to support students with learning, developing, and applying their social and emotional competencies. The Getting it Down PATT (Purpose, Alignment, Transparency, and Target) process can be used to develop SEL Signature Practice learning experiences that are connected to the concepts that you are teaching.
 	
 Vocabulary Development Routine: Provide students with the opportunity to work with vocabulary in context and
	Day 1
	 Build Background/Introduce the Concept/Welcoming-Inclusion Activity
	 Big Idea: How can we decide what's important?
	 Essential Question: What can people do to bring about a positive change? (p. T138)
	
	 • Add the Weekly Essential Question to the Tree Map started at the beginning of the unit.
	 • Define the concept: "This week we will be thinking about the concept of activism. Activism is **action to make a change, or stop a change, in society.** It can be trying to make a government change its laws, or trying to make people change what they do. The texts we will be reading this week include people who take a stand to bring about positive change.
	
	 ❤️**Equity Note: Welcome/Inclusion Activity: TeacherCreates**
	
	 • Show Weekly Concept Videos and discuss/record student responses to the following questions:
	  ○ *What do you notice? Wonder?*
	  ○ *How did the person/people in the video take action to bring about change?*
	
	 🌟*Coach's Note:You may want to use a Tree Map to help organize the concepts and understanding of the unit. Place Big Idea Essential Question at the top of Tree Map and the weekly question as the branches and revisit at the end of each week.*
	
	 Quick Write: (Provide the following option or create your own)
	 • What are some peaceful ways people can defy laws they want to change?
	 Introduce Vocabulary
	 *See additional Vocabulary Development Activities in Days 2-4

engage in vocabulary strategies whenever reading or discussing text. Inviting students to actively revisit selected vocabulary in fun and interactive ways will reinforce the meaning. This is formative for the teacher to help plan and adjust instruction.	Follow the Define/Example/Ask routine from the Vocabulary: Words in Context lesson (TE p.T142-143) for introducing the key vocabulary. Model the routine utilizing slide deck, Visual Vocabulary Cards, or Digital Visual Glossary on Wonders platform. ● **Key Vocabulary:** anticipation, defy, entitled, neutral, outspoken, reserved, sought, unequal 🌟*Coach's Note: In support of our multilingual learners, revisit the Vocabulary Strategy lessons with EL students in a designated small group opportunity.* ❤️**Equity Note: T-SEL Optimistic Closure: Teacher Created**

Notice & Wonder Routine:
Provides students an opportunity to notice, wonder, and begin growing ideas about text before the teacher provides input. Inviting students to engage with and talk about text will encourage questioning about what is happening and bring awareness of the language demands. This is formative for the teacher and engaging for the reader.
	Day 2-4 Building Knowledge
	Comprehension Through Close Reading ❤️**Equity Note - Teacher created Welcome/InclusionActivity and Optimistic Closure daily**
	
	🌟*Coach's Note:The literature anthology offers a grade-level complex text to support comprehension and meaning making and, often is rich enough to merit 3 days of instruction. If not, you may decide to identify an additional text that supports knowledge building/volume of reading.*
	❤️**EQUITY NOTE:** You might consider using the "Rosa" Culturally Responsive Lesson guide linked in place of the following.
	
	First Read/Notice and Wonder Notice and Wonder NoteTaking Tool
	● Have each student locate the complex text **"Rosa"** in the Anthology text.
	● Remind students of the weekly question and provide a brief overview of the text focusing on the elements of biography. (See T150-T151).
	● Provide time for students to explore the text independently, taking notes about what they notice and wonder.
	● Read the whole text aloud without stopping and with students following along.
	● Possible Guiding Questions:
	   o What do you notice? (vocabulary/point of view/genre)
	   o What are you wondering? (vocabulary/point of view/genre)
	
	Revisit the Text: Questions to Build Understanding
	● Reread focus sections of the text together. When appropriate, invite students to read sections aloud to the class during this reading, especially to support their thinking with text evidence.
	● Suggested Guiding Questions:
	   ○ Use **Access Complex Text (ACT)** and **"Read"** questions from the TE pgs.T153A-153Q
	
	Vocabulary Strategies
	The vocabulary strategy for the week is Prefixes and Suffixes (T152). Directly teach this skill prior to applying it across the week. Use the texts and (text dependent questions) to practice the skill.
	● Teach Prefixes and Suffixes (T152)
	● Practice in Anthology

3

- Practice in Knowledge Building/Volume of Reading passages

🌟***Coach's Note:*** *In support of our multilingual learners, revisit the vocabulary strategy lessons with EL students in a designated small group opportunity.*

Academic Vocabulary Routine

Continue practicing the vocabulary words for the week in a strategic manner. Consider:

- Expand Vocabulary (T164)
- Reinforce the Words (T165)
- Academic Vocabulary (bottom of page T164)
- The volume of reading texts may not have exact vocabulary words for the week. However, the words can be used through discussion and questioning.

🌟***Coach's Note:*** *Provide multilingual (EL) students with additional integrated language support through the use of text-specific questioning (see EL sidebar in TE) and effective scaffolds (i.e., Thinking Maps, sentence frames). Additional attention to unpacking text structure with Differentiated Texts during designated small group instruction further increases access to complex text.*

Revisit the Text: Questions to Build Deeper Understanding/Use Evidence

🌟***Coach's Note:****This discussion and text study should be intentionally planned with the needs of all students. The questions center on the author's craft and identity, joy, and criticality. Make sure you carefully partner students for support, are clear about what chunks of text they should focus on, and provide the scaffolds for successful access.*

- Reread focus sections of the text together. Use this third read as a chance for students to take on some of the reading.
- ❤️***EQUITY NOTE : The following questions/activitiessupport access for all, further encourage identity work, increase joyful interactions, and/or deepen childrens' critical consciousness.***
    - Use **"Reread"** questions from TE pgs.T153A-153Q
    - What did Rosa and others in the community do to bring about a positive change? Can you think of another way that could have helped the community bring about change?
    - On page 304, the story says that during the confrontation on the bus, some Black people got off, "recognizing the potential for ugliness." What kind of ugliness were they thinking might occur because Parks was refusing to give up her seat? Why do you think they were anticipating this?
    - Can you think of any current day situations that might promote others to act to make change?
    - What lesson did Rosa Parks teach us?
    - What are different types of nonviolent protests that you have seen in the news? On social media? In person?
    - There are many different forms of activism (animal, global,etc..) What issues do you find important to activate for today?

Revisit the Test/Use Evidence:

- Possible Evidence Based Question:
    - What is the author's point of view about Rosa's work to bring about change?
    - Write a statement that best summarizes the author's point of view of Rosa Parks.

Respond to Text Routine:
Provides students with an opportunity to support ideas and arguments with text-based evidence. Inviting students to respond to a prompt using common source materials allows for the teacher to formatively assess comprehension and is a valuable life-long skill for the writer.

4

Quick Write Routine: Provides students with a daily opportunity to develop writing stamina while thinking deeply about the text. Inviting students to make connections to concepts and identify personal/societal aspirations is formative for the teacher and engaging for the writer.	**Daily Wrap Up** (Connect to Concept/Suggestions for across the week) ● What did you learn today? ● How does it connect to the EQ? ● What can we add to our Tree Map? ● What does this inspire you to do? 🌟*Coach's Note: Continue to*capture students new learning/thinking on the Tree Map throughout the week. **Daily Quick Write Options:** ● Describe the chain of events that happened after Rosa Parks was arrested. Who were the people that helped spread the information about the boycott? ● Do you know of any people (famous or not) who have done courageous things to seek positive change? Describe who they are and their actions. ● What did Rosa and others in the community do to bring about a positive change? ● Why is it important for people to stand up for what they believe to be right? ● "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." - Ida B Wells. What does this quote mean to you and how does it connect to our reading this week?
Volume of Reading Routine: Provides students with an opportunity to build deeper meaning, add to the concept, and expand vocabulary knowledge. Inviting students to connect across texts and ideas will build a solid foundation for comprehension and conceptual understanding. **Integrate/Collaborative Conversation Routine:** Provides students with an opportunity to communicate their big understanding of the unit. Inviting students to convey their own meaning allows for the student to make connections between their feelings, ideas, words and actions, and those of others.	Day 5 Integrate/Collaborative Conversation **Knowledge Building/Volume of Reading** Provide an additional text resource that attends to building word and world knowledge connected to the concept of activism. This could be done earlier in the week depending on the needs of students. Some suggestions include: ● **"Frederick Douglass"** (Wonders Shared read p.266-269) ● "Our Voices, Our Votes" *Culturally Responsive Lesson* (Wonder Paired Text p. 232-235) Wonders Leveled Readers ● "Jane Addams: A Woman of Action" Newsela Articles- ● Rosa Parks exhibition presents civil rights hero in her own words ● Civil Rights Activists: Claudette Colvin ● Notorious Victoria: the first woman to run for president ● The Abolitionists: Frederick Douglass ● Women champions for reform in the late 19th and early 20th centuries Suggested Guiding Questions: ● How did the person/people you read about use activism to bring about a positive change? ● Can you find any connections across the texts that we read this week? What are they? **Collaborative Discussion (Growing the Concept/Understanding)** Discuss Weekly EQ of the Week and the Big Idea EQ of the Unit in connection to the reading, discussions, and writing that has taken place. Consider capturing the conceptual meaning making and understanding that has been reached on a Tree Map.

5

- **Revisit the Big Idea Essential Question:**How do we decide what's important?
- **Revisit the Weekly Essential Question:**What can people do to bring about a positive change?
  - What have you learned?
  - What does it inspire you to do?
  - How does what we have learned connect to the idea of taking action to make positive change?

❤️**Equity Note: T-SEL Optimistic Closure - TeacherCreates**

<u>Wrap Up/Write:</u>
- What can people do to bring about a positive change?

🌟*Coach's Note:You may want to consider using this day to facilitate Inquiry work. Encourage students to use vocabulary learned this week during discussion and writing.*

Foundational Skills Phonics/Structural Analysis/Fluency
🌟**Coach's Note:**Wonders offers a spelling/fluency component in grades 3-5 that includes explicit instruction and practice in phonics/spelling, structural analysis, and fluency. In weeks 1-5 of each unit, a phonics skill is introduced with single-syllable words, then applied to multisyllabic words. The spelling skill is always connected to the phonics skill for the week. The structural analysis skills are usually more worthwhile and connect to the 3-5 foundational standards. The foundational skills align with college- and career-readiness standards and can be addressed through instructional groupings (whole group, small group) that best addresses the needs of students .

Skills of the Week Foundational Skills Evidence of Learning Data Collection
Phonics/Spelling: Homographs **Structural Analysis:** Multisyllabic words with Homographs **Fluency:** Phrasing 🌟*Coach's Note: Wonders spelling words are meant tosupport the phonics instruction instead of memorization. These should be used to assess prior knowledge and application through dictation.*

Quality Core Components	Resources

Phonics: Homographs
Follow the systematic routines in Wonders TE p. T154 as needed for whole or small group differentiated instruction
 	
Decodable Passages- Collaborative Practice, Independent practice
Provides an opportunity for students to apply the phonic/spelling skills taught to date through controlled texts. This is formative for the teacher to help plan and adjust instruction.
	• Word Sorts (See Wonders TE p.T162) Teacher Resource Bookpage 59)
	• Your Turn Practice Book p.178
	• Wonders Digital Platform-Interactive Games & Activities
	• Digital Phonics/Fluency Instructional Deck
	• Homographs Practice
	• Homographs Decodable Passage
	• Examples/Ideas for Engagement:
	   ○ Mix/Pair/Share Activity
	   ○ Concentration
	○ Roll the Dice(Blank Template)

Structural Analysis: Multisyllabic words with Homographs Follow the systematic routines in Wonders TE p. T155 as needed for whole or small group differentiated instruction	• Wonders Digital Platform-Interactive Games & Activities
Fluency - Direct Instruction, Guided InstructionCollaborative Practice, Independent Practice Fluency refers to the accuracy, pacing, and expression readers tend to while reading out loud. Lack of fluency results in a lack of reading comprehension. If you have dysfluent students, then you must provide them with daily opportunities to improve their fluency.	🌟*Coach's Note:There are two research-backed ways to improve fluency. This includes having students follow along as you model fluent reading, and repeated reading of a chunk of grade-level text (either chorally, with a buddy, or silently, if able).* • Fluency • Fluency Rubric Your Turn Practice Book Fluency Passage • " A Warrior for a Women's rights" (p.173)

	Shared Read Passage ● "Frederick Douglass Freedom's Choice" Anthology Passage ● "Rosa" Reader's Theatre ● "The Golden Door"
Dictation - Formative Assessment Opportunity Provides an opportunity for students to apply their phonics learning. This is formative for the teacher to plan and adjust for those students who have not mastered the skill. Engage students in dictation several times across the week. Based on multiple forms of data, consider including previously taught spelling patterns during dictation several times a week.	🌟*Coach's Note:This is a routine that should be utilized as needed to progress monitor and address possible gaps in application of phonics skills.* **Sentences for Dictation** **Use the provided sentences for dictation at the end of the week.** *(The words in the sentences require students to generalize their knowledge of the spelling patterns.)* ● I agree with the **content** of the book. ● My brother gave me a **present** yesterday. ● If time **permits**, I will be able to show the movie to my friends.

Genre Writing Process & Grammar

🌟**Coach's Note:**The genre writing instruction is to support the structure and strategies necessary to be successful on the end of unit Performance Task. Based on experience, available resources, and the task teachers have the choice to utilize the Wonders genre writing process lessons in the back of the Teacher's Edition or the guidance below that amplifies the Write from the Beginning practices.

Skills of the Week

Imaginative/Fictional Narrative
- Begin Modeling a Fictional/Imagined Narrative
- Daily Mini-Lessons (based on students' needs)

Language/Grammar:
- Pronoun Verb Agreement

🌟*Coach's Note: Grammar instruction to support qualitywriting is ideal. Opportunities for students to try new grammar learning in their own writing helps them see its value immediately and allows practice in context.*

Instructional Guidance	Resources
Begin Modeling a fictional/imagined narrative **This model is designed to take place over the next 6 instructional sessions. It will begin here and continue during the next week.** ● You may choose to use the sample provided below or create your own with the class. The purpose is to create a class story together with scaffolding based on the needs of your students. ● Explain to the students that you will be **working together to write a fictional narrative or short story about a group of kids that want to vote on the new playground that is being built.** ● Together you will create the story elements based on this scenario along with mapping out the structure. ● **Provide the problem for the story, "You are part of a contest that asks all students to write a short story about a group of students at Douglass Elementary that want the right to vote on the design of the new playground."** ● Based on this prompt, work collaboratively to create a Tree Map with possible characters, a setting, an event sequence, and a final explanation of how they got their voices heard. Remind students to think about how figurative language can help to develop the characters and responses to events. Tell students they will learn information about voting rights from expository text that could be used as concrete details in their short story *(See "Our Voices, Our Votes")*	**WftB & Beyond Instructional Binder for Narrative Writing Support** ● Narrative Writing Resources ● Imaginative /Fictional Narrative pgs. 349-358 ● Setting the Stage Binder (See Mini Lessons) **Wonders Genre Writing** ● Fictional Narrative pgs. T344-T349 ● Poetry pgs. T350-T355
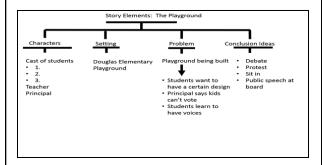
<u>Mini Lessons: Strategies for creative endings and effective story leads</u>

Setting the Stage Binder
- Creative endings: See p.222
- Replicate effective story leads: See p. 223

Language/Grammar: Pronoun-Verb Agreement (Days 1-2)T160
• Review with students what they have learned about verbs and subject pronouns
• Explain the rules for agreement of subject pronoun and present-tense verbs. **(See Grammar Handbook p.464 in Reading/Writing Workshop).**
   o Subject Pronouns:**he, she,** and **it**
      ▪ Add –s or –es to most verbs
      ▪ Example: **She trades** comic books.
   o Subject Pronouns:**I, we, you,** and **they**
      ▪ Do not add –s or –es to the verb
      ▪ Example: **We read** everyday.
• Introduce the irregular pronouns **have** and **be** and provide examples of the present-tense forms of each.
• Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss what they have learned about pronoun-verb agreement.
• Tell students to think about how they should check their writing to make sure they are forming sentences correctly when using pronouns and verbs.
Abbreviations (Days 3-5) T161
• Explain the definition of an abbreviation as a shortened form of a word.
• Have students record the different types of abbreviations: people's titles, kinds of streets, and state names.
• Provide time for students to locate examples in text and identify the type of abbreviation and the use of capital letters.
• Have students practice creating abbreviations for the different types.
	☀️*Coach's Note: Grammar instruction to support quality writing is ideal. Opportunities for students to try new grammar learning in their own writing helps them see its value immediately and allows practice in context. In support of how language works, planning additional designated small group instruction to support multilingual learners in these skills is important.*
	
	• **Wonders Teacher's Edition pgs. T160-T161**
	• **Grammar Handbook p.464 in Reading/Writing Workshop**
	• [Wonders Grammar Practice Reproducibles](#)
	• **Interactive Games & Activities: Designated EL Instruction**

10

Social Emotional Learning – Self-Management

Lesson Title: History-grounded Self-Calming Strategies to Manage Emotions
Grade level: Gr. 6-12
Lesson Length: 45-55 minutes

Lesson Plan
Prior Learning: Understanding of social emotional learning: five core competencies – self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills (see CASEL handout)
Learning Objective: Students will develop and demonstrate self-management skills, the ability to self-monitor and regulate emotions and develop positive behaviors related to school and life success
Student Expectations: Applies self-calming strategies; demonstrates understanding of managing emotions and behaviors through identification of coping skills such as calming down, walking away, and asking for help when they are overwhelmed by strong emotions.
Guiding Questions: 1. What are some strong emotions that people feel? (happiness, anger, excitement, frustration, impatience, sadness, fear etc.) 2. Is it good to keep all your emotions on the inside? Why or why not? 3. Why do you think it might be hard to talk about our emotions? 4. What self-calming strategies can you use to mitigate or work through your emotions? 5. Who can you turn to for help with managing strong emotions?? (family, friends, school counselor, trusted adult)

Vocabulary	
Essential: • emotion – a strong feeling (e.g. excitement) • self-management – management of or by oneself; taking responsibility for one's own behavior or well-being • self-calming – the act of soothing oneself • coping – to manage with success	**Supporting:** • behavior – the way in which a person acts in response to a particular situation • mitigate – make less severe, serious, or painful

Teacher Preparation
• 📢 EL/ML support: Write essential vocabulary (with definitions) and guiding questions on whiteboard or chart tablet or post/email students • Provide paper copies or digital access to the student handout below (Answer key follows) • Watch "Hakuna Matata" video from Disney's The Lion King • Read/analyze the quote from Djedkhonsefanhk's Moral Self Portrait printed in *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* • Label chart tablet, whiteboard, or poster: Self-Calming Strategies • Remind students to capture their thinking on their handouts

Activities
Warm Up (whole group): 1. Brainstorm the types of emotions people experience 2. Share the focus of the lesson – learning objective and student expectations

3. 📣EL/ML support: Introduce vocabulary words and review definitions
4. Review guiding questions
5. Identify strong emotions and invite students to brainstorm a list of how those emotions can cause problems if left unaddressed

Discussion (whole group):
1. Watch "Hakuna Matata" (Set up ahead of time to avoid ads)
2. Discuss what emotions was Simba (the lion cub) feeling initially? What kinds of actions did he and his friends take to improve Simba's emotional state?
3. Invite students to participate in a whole group discussion of guiding question #2 (Is it good to keep all your emotions on the inside? Why or why not?)
4. Repeat this activity with guiding question #3 (Why do you think it might be hard to talk about our emotions?)

Skill Practice (whole group):
1. Read the statement from Djedkhonsefanhk's Moral Self Portrait.
2. Invite students to think-pair-share or "Think-pair-write-share" about what the statement means, and what that statement teaches us about Self-Management
3. Ask students to compare and contrast the statement from Djedkhonsefanhk's Moral Self Portrait with "Hakuna Matata"
4. Ask students to list examples of what these two sources teach us about remaining in control when we feel emotional. Have students share with a partner, then share with the class.
5. Pose guiding question #4 (What self-calming strategies can you use to mitigate, or work through, your emotions?)
6. Direct students to use the "define in context" thinking map on Self Management and ask them to write down 3-4 self-calming strategies they can utilize to cope with strong emotions.
7. Students share thoughts with the whole group.
   a. Listening students can put a checkmark by ideas they already have written down
   b. Students write down new ideas from their classmates in a different color (or they can put a star by new ideas)
8. Ask students to reflect on guiding question 5 (Who can you turn to for help with managing strong emotions?? (family, friends, school counselor, trusted adult)). Students should add this to their map.

Wrap Up

Wrap Up (whole group discussion):
1. Review lesson learning objective, student expectations, and guiding questions
2. Invite students to think about "what they learned from the lesson today" and ask several students to share with the whole group
3. Invite students to discuss self-calming strategies they will use in the future in stressful situations to effectively manage strong emotions like fear

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Checking for Understanding (evaluation)

- Check for understanding periodically throughout the lesson, providing guidance as necessary
- Monitor student engagement and active participation of each and every student
- Exit ticket: Have students complete this statement on the bottom of their handout:

_____ is a useful Self-Management strategy I can use when I'm feeling _____
in order to help me _____. Using this technique, will also help my class by _____.

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

Self Management: Taking responsibility for one's own behavior or well-being

What actions did Timon (the meerkat) and Pumba (the warthog) take to help Simba (the lion cub) cope with his feelings?
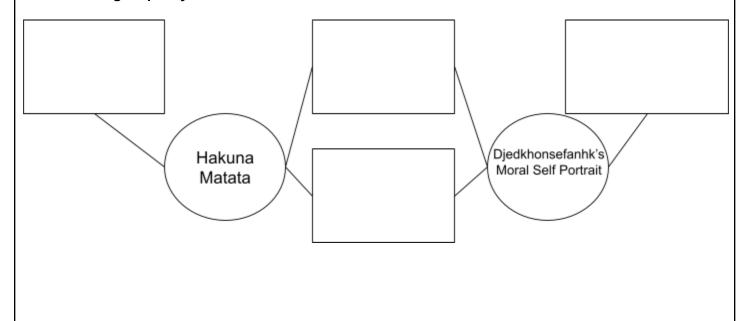
This is an excerpt from Djedkhonsefanhk's moral self-portrait. He was an Ancient Egyptian who served under Aman Re and other Egyptian leaders.

"I kept my mouth clean
of harming one who harmed me,
My patience turned my enemies
into associates,
I controlled my mouth
and was skilled at responding...
I caused them all to greet me
for my excellence,
...and saying of me:
An offspring of his father,
A divine descendant of his mother.
No one spoke evil of my parents
because of me."

What do you think this statement means?

What does it teach us about Self-Management?

Compare and Contrast the strategies or ideas you observed about shifting your emotional state. **Add boxes to the thinking map as you see fit.**

Hakuna Matata

Djedkhonsefanhk's Moral Self Portrait

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

Add to the definition of Self Management by writing down some strategies you can use to handle your emotions.

Self-Management

management of or by oneself; taking responsibility for one's own behavior or well-being

Complete this statement:

_____ is a useful Self-Management strategy I can use when I'm feeling

_____ in order to help me _____.

Using this technique, will also help my class by _____.

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

Self Management: Taking responsibility for one's own behavior or well-being

What actions did Timon (the meerkat) and Pumba (the warthog) take to help Simba (the lion cub) cope with his feelings?

- They used humor
- Music/singing
- Dance/Exercise
- Pumba shared about his struggles
- Motivational quotes "Hakuna Matata" (Swahili for no worries/problems) encouraged Pumba to accept how his body is and functions--things that were out of his control, This understanding helped him be happy.
- They were supportive of one another

This is an excerpt fromfrom Djedkhonsefanhk's moral self-portrait. He was an Ancient Egyptian who served under Aman Re and other Egyptian leaders.
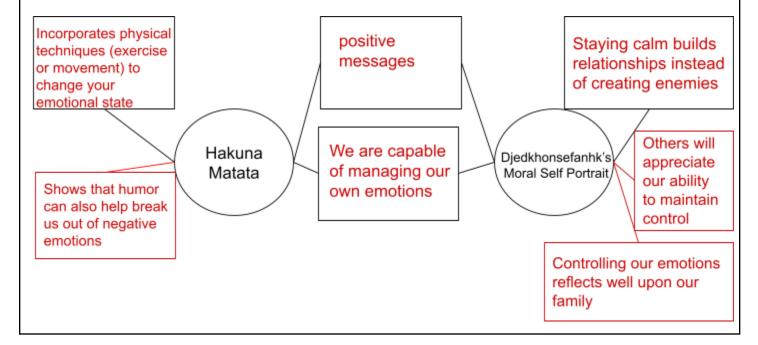
From Djedkhonsefanhk's moral self-portrait…

"I kept my mouth clean
of harming one who harmed me,
My patience turned my enemies
into associates,
I controlled my mouth
and was skilled at responding…
I caused them all to greet me
for my excellence,
…and saying of me:
An offspring of his father,
A divine descendant of his mother.
No one spoke evil of my parents
because of me."

What do you think this statement means?

What does it teach us about Self-Management?

Compare and Contrast the strategies or ideas you observed about shifting your emotional state. Add boxes to the thinking map as you see fit.

Incorporates physical techniques (exercise or movement) to change your emotional state

positive messages

Staying calm builds relationships instead of creating enemies

Hakuna Matata

Shows that humor can also help break us out of negative emotions

We are capable of managing our own emotions

Djedkhonsefanhk's Moral Self Portrait

Others will appreciate our ability to maintain control

Controlling our emotions reflects well upon our family

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

Add to the definition of Self Management by writing down some strategies you can use to handle your emotions.

Mindful breathing

Counting to 10

exercise

Talking with a friend or trusted adult

meditating

Self-Management

management of or by oneself; taking responsibility for one's own behavior or well-being

Think before I speak or act

Listening to music

Find a solution to the problem

Reflect on my strengths

Set goals

Focus on what I can control

Complete this statement:

_____ is a useful Self-Management strategy I can use when I'm feeling

_____ in order to help me _____.

Using this technique, will also help my class by _____.

Sample Math Lesson

Examples of the "Considerations for Mathematics Scope and Sequence Documents listed in the Report on pages 9-10.

Denver Public Schools

1. Begin with a clear vision for strong mathematics teaching that includes purpose-driven work, offering rich and meaningful tasks, promoting equitable discourse, encouraging questioning and curiosity, and valuing diversity.
   See Lesson Guide page 2.

2. Provide clarity in what is expected and what is needed to minimize misconceptions and misunderstandings.
   See Lesson Guide page 8.

3. Identify what students have learned in previous grades and how that learning connects to standards/objectives in the current grade level.
   See Lesson Guide page 4–5, 9.

4. Be explicit in identifying what needs to be taught and address the depth of knowledge students are expected to attain in these areas in each grade level.
   See Lesson Guide page 5-7.

5. Provide guidance on academic language specific to mathematics that addresses the needs of struggling students, English learners.
   See Lesson Guide page 8.

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Content Area	Mathematics	Grade Level	5

Grade 5 Common Core State Standards			

Domain	Cluster/Essential Learning Goal
Operations and Algebraic Thinking (5.OA)	5.OA.A: Write and interpret numerical expressions. (Additional)
	5.OA.B: Analyze patterns and relationships. (Additional)
Number and Operations in Base Ten (5.NBT)	5.NBT.A: Understand the place value system. (Major)
	5.NBT.B: Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to hundredths. (Major)
Number and Operations — Fractions (5.NF)	5.NF.A: Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions. (Major)
	5.NF.B: Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions. (Major)
Measurement and Data (5.MD)	5.MD.A: Convert like measurement units within a given measurement system. (Supporting)
	5.MD.B: Represent and interpret data. (Supporting)
	5.MD.C: Geometric measurement: Understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition. (Major)
Geometry (5.G)	5.G.A: Graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems. (Additional)
	5.G.B: Classify two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties. (Additional)

Considerations were provided to fourth grade teachers in the 2020-21 school year identifying prioritized, minimized, and eliminated content that may impact 5th grade content preparedness. The Grade 4 Priority Instruction Summary should be used in conjunction with communication with 4th grade teachers to identify and design just-in-time supports for each 5th grade unit.

An asterisk in the 5th grade units' Accelerating Learning tables indicates a standard that received lighter treatment in 4th grade. Supplemental resources to support accelerating learning just in time are suggested in the Take Action column of the unit specific table.

Major clusters require greater emphasis based on depth of ideas, time they take to master, and their importance to future mathematics. An intense focus on these clusters allows in-depth learning carried out through the Standards for Mathematical Practice. **Supporting** clusters are closely connected to the major clusters and strengthen areas of major emphasis. **Additional** clusters may not tightly or explicitly connect to the major work of the grade. **All** standards should be taught as **all** will be assessed.

Suggested Student Learning Objective (SLO) Statements

- All students will make sense of and solve problems involving multi-digit whole numbers and decimals using the four operations, and justify their reasoning orally and in writing.
- All students will add and subtract fractions with unlike denominators, multiply fractions, and solve word problems involving addition, subtraction, and multiplication of fractions, using visual fraction models and equations, and justify their reasoning orally and in writing.

Effective and Equitable Mathematics Practices

Standards for Mathematical Practice

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

8 Effective Teaching Practices

1. Establish mathematics goals to focus learning.
2. Implement tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving.
3. Use and connect mathematical representations.
4. Facilitate meaningful mathematical discourse.
5. Pose purposeful questions.
6. Build procedural fluency from conceptual understanding.
7. Support productive struggle in learning mathematics.
8. Elicit and use evidence of student thinking.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2014). *Principles to actions: Ensuring mathematical success for all.* Reston, VA.

5 Equity Based Math Practices

1. Going deep with mathematics.
2. Leveraging multiple mathematical competencies.
3. Affirming mathematics learners' identities.
4. Challenging spaces of marginality.
5. Drawing on multiple resources of knowledge.

Aguirre, J. (2013). *The impact of identity in K-8 mathematics learning and teaching: Rethinking equity-based practice.* Reston, VA: The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

A mathematically engaged classroom draws upon a balance of the Standards for Mathematical Practice, 8 Effective Teaching Practices, and 5 Equity Based Math Practices. Together these effective and equitable mathematics practices support students engaging as mathematicians focusing on conceptualizing mathematics, processes, proficiencies, and reasoning.

During the 2019-2020 school year, DPS mathematics teachers engaged in a series of professional learning opportunities with NCTM's *Taking Action: Implementing Effective Mathematics Teaching Practices*. This text brings together the effective and equitable mathematics practices identified above. The text should be available at your school for reference.

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Academic Year Overview of *Bridges in Mathematics*		
Unit of Study	**Length of Unit***	**Time Frame**
1: Expressions, Equations & Volume	24 days	August 23–September 24, 2021
2: Adding & Subtracting Fractions	25 days	September 28–November 3, 2021
3: Place Value & Decimals	27 days	November 4–December 17, 2021
4: Multiplying & Dividing Whole Numbers & Decimals	25 days	January 4–February 8, 2022
5: Multiplying & Dividing Fractions	26 days	February 9–March 18, 2022
6: Graphing, Geometry & Volume	24 days	March 21-April 29, 2022
7: Division & Decimals	23 days	May 2-June 1, 2022
8: Playground Design - recommended to be taught outside the regular math block as a STEM unit in spring 2022, if time allows.		

*Extra time has been built into each unit for re-engagement with critical prerequisite standards, when needed, and for unit assessments and CMAS tests.

End-of-Year Fluency Expectation
●   Fluently multiply multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm. 5.NBT.B.5

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Accelerating Learning	
Understand Major Standard Clusters	**Take Action** Just in time opportunities to accelerate learning of prerequisite knowledge and skills
5.NBT.A Understand the place value system. 5.NBT.B Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and with decimals to hundredths. 5.NF.A Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions. 5.NF.B Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions. 5.MD.C Geometric measurement: understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition.	Unit 1 Unit 2 Unit 3 Unit 4 Unit 5 Unit 6 Unit 7

For ELA-S teachers implementing the Strategic Use of Two Languages in math, click here.

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Unit of Study	1: Expressions, Equations & Volume	Length of Unit	24 days (August 23–September 24, 2021)

Unit Learning Trajectory	In this unit, students use the study of volume to review and extend a host of skills and concepts related to multiplication. In Module 1, students explore the associative and commutative properties of multiplication as they use expressions with parentheses to represent different rectangular prisms made by arranging 24 cubes. In Module 2, students find the surface area of boxes to further develop an understanding of volume and the ways it differs from area, as well as the use of the associative property in expressions with parentheses. In Module 3, students develop major multi-digit multiplication strategies to solve real-world and mathematical problems in various ways. In Module 4, the link between multiplication and division is revisited through the lens of the area model and extended into dividing 3-digit by 2-digit numbers. Over the course of the unit, students are introduced to four Work Place games to build multiplicative thinking—a key component for success with division and fractions throughout the rest of the year.
Skills & Concepts to be Mastered	- Write and evaluate numerical expressions with parentheses. 5.OA.A.1 - Write a simple expression to record calculations with numbers, and interpret numerical expressions without evaluating them. 5.OA.A.2 - Demonstrate an understanding that unit cubes can be used to measure the volumes of other solid figures. 5.MD.C.3a - Demonstrate an understanding that a solid figure that can be packed without gaps or overlaps by *n* unit cubes has a volume of *n* cubic units. 5.MD.C.3b - Measure volumes by counting unit cubes, using cubic cm, cubic in., cubic ft., and improvised units. 5.MD.C.4 - Find the volume of a right rectangular prism with whole-number side lengths by packing it with unit cubes, and show that the volume is the same as would be found by multiplying the edge lengths, equivalently by multiplying the height by the area of the base. Represent threefold whole-number products as volumes. 5.MD.C.5a
[20/21 Grade 4 Priority Instruction Considerations](#)	**Aligned Prior Grade Level Cluster:** 4.MD.A.3 Apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles in real world and mathematical problems. (supporting) **Consideration:** *Combined* lessons on problems involving measurement, except for those on measurement conversion (see 4.MD.A.1). *Reduced* the amount of time spent on this topic.

Common Core State Standards	**Operations and Algebraic Thinking (5.OA)**
	Write and interpret numerical expressions. (Additional) [5.OA.A]
	5.OA.A.1: Use parentheses, brackets, or braces in numerical expressions and evaluate expressions with these symbols.
	5.OA.A.2: Write simple expressions that record calculations with numbers and interpret numerical expressions without evaluating them. *For example, express the calculation "add 8 and 7, then multiply by 2" as 2 × (8 + 7). Recognize that 3 × (18932 + 921) is three times as large as 18932 + 921, without having to calculate the indicated sum or product.*
	Number and Operations in Base Ten (5.NBT)
	Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and with decimals to hundredths. (Major) [5.NBT.B]
	5.NBT.B.6: Find whole-number quotients of whole numbers with up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. Illustrate and explain the calculation using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models.
	Measurement and Data (5.MD)
	Geometric measurement: Understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition. (Major) [5.MD.C]
	5.MD.C.3: Recognize volume as an attribute of solid figures and understand concepts of volume measurement.
	    a. A cube with side length 1 unit, called a "unit cube," is said to have "one cubic unit" of volume, and can be used to measure volume.
	    b. A solid figure which can be packed without gaps or overlaps using *n* unit cubes is said to have a volume of *n* cubic units.
	5.MD.C.4: Measure volumes by counting unit cubes, using cubic cm, cubic in., cubic ft., and improvised units.
	5.MD.C.5: Relate volume to the operations of multiplication and addition and solve real world and mathematical problems involving volume.

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

	a. Find the volume of a right rectangular prism with whole-number side lengths by packing it with unit cubes, and show that the volume is the same as would be found by multiplying the edge lengths, equivalently by multiplying the height by the area of the base. Represent threefold whole-number products as volumes, e.g., to represent the associative property of multiplication.
End-of-Year Fluency Expectation	● N/A

Generalizations (Conceptual Understanding) Students understand...	Guiding Questions to Build Conceptual Understanding
● Universal order of operations ensures uniformity and accuracy of solutions. 5.OA.A.1	● What is the order of operations? ● Why does the order of operations matter?
● Place value, properties of operations, and the relationship between multiplication and division support multi-digit number division. 5.NBT.B.6	● How is multiplication used to divide multi-digit numbers? ● What is the role of place value in the division algorithm? ● How are mathematical operations related? ● Why is zero important in our place value system? ● How does the relationship between multiplication and division support division when using a division algorithm?
● One-unit by one-unit by one-unit cubes provide a means to measure volumes of rectangular prisms. 5.MD.C.3a	● What is the volume of a one-unit by one-unit by one-unit right rectangular prism? ● Why is it important to have no gaps and overlaps when filling spaces to determine volume?

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Key Knowledge and Skills (Procedural Skill and Application)
Students are able to...

- Write and evaluate numerical expressions with parentheses. 5.OA.A.1
- Write a simple expression to record calculations with numbers, and interpret numerical expressions without evaluating them. 5.OA.A.2
- Divide a 3-digit whole number by a 2-digit whole number using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. 5.NBT.B.6
- Use rectangular arrays and area models to explain strategies for dividing a 3-digit number by a 2-digit number. 5.NBT.B.6
- Demonstrate an understanding that unit cubes can be used to measure the volumes of other solid figures. 5.MD.C.3a
- Demonstrate an understanding that a solid figure that can be packed without gaps or overlaps by *n* unit cubes has a volume of *n* cubic units. 5.MD.C.3b
- Measure volumes by counting unit cubes, using cubic cm, cubic in., cubic ft., and improvised units. 5.MD.C.4
- Find the volume of a right rectangular prism with whole-number side lengths by packing it with unit cubes, and show that the volume is the same as would be found by multiplying the edge lengths, equivalently by multiplying the height by the area of the base. Represent threefold whole-number products as volumes. 5.MD.C.5a

WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Mathematics Standards
3: English language learners **communicate** information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of **mathematics**.
Academic Language is the language needed to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It consists of language at the word, sentence, and discourse level.
Cross-Content Academic Words & Technical Words Specific to Content
Area*, area model of multiplication, array*, associative property of multiplication*, base*, column, commutative property of multiplication*, composite number*, dimension*, divide*,dividend*, divisor*, double/doubling, equation*, estimate*, evaluate, expression*, factor*, half*/halve/halving, height, length, measurement, multiple*, multiply*, number relationship, open array*, parentheses*, partial products, prime number, product*, quotient*, ratio table*, rectangular prism*, relationship, remainder*, strategy, surface area*, row, sum or total*, value, volume*, width

*Identifies terms for which Word Resource Cards are available.

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Resources	
Unit Overview	Unit 1: Expressions, Equations & Volume
Core Lessons	*Bridges in Mathematics* Teacher Guide ● See first page in Unit 1 Overview for Modules and Sessions.
Misconceptions	● Division is a complex operation, and students who depend on following rote steps cannot determine whether their answer is reasonable. Emphasis on place value and connections to multiplication will help students to develop a deeper understanding of division. All division experience should be developed in the context of asking a question such as "How many groups of 20 can you make from 700?" and then allowing students to estimate and identify the number of objects (for example, if I make 30 groups of 20 that would be 600, and if I make 40 groups that would be 800, and that is too high). Such reasoning will help students to hone in on a good estimate and use partial products or a ratio table to determine the exact quotient. ● Some students may think only about one of the dimensions needed to find volume. Some students may believe that because an object is tall, it will have lots of volume, ignoring the other two dimensions. Provide additional experiences for students to measure and compare a variety of objects by using all three dimensions to address this misconception. ● Some mnemonics for the order of operations can be misleading, such as PEMDAS which students often interpret as multiplication before division and addition before subtraction. Students need to understand that multiplication/division have the same precedence and addition/subtraction have the same precedence, so when given both multiplication and division in an expression or both addition and subtraction, one solves for those operations left to right.
Key Concepts, Models & Strategies	*Bridges in Mathematics* Teacher Guide, Unit 1 ● See Concepts, Models & Strategies discussion on pages ii- v.
Number Corner	● See fifth grade scope and sequence on Bridges Educator Website (https://bridges.mathlearningcenter.org/user) for Number Corner calendar.
Diagnosing Prerequisite Learning	Diagnostic items - see accelerated learning table diagnose column, page 9
Assessments	● Unit 1 Screener and/or Number Corner Baseline Assessment (see *Bridges Assessment Guide* Number Corner Assessments), selected items to diagnose prerequisite knowledge for unit 1 only (see diagnose column below). ● Numerical Expressions Checkpoint, Module 2, Session 1 ● Boxes Work Sample, Module 2, Session 5 ● Multiplication & Volume Checkpoint, Module 3, Session 2 ● Unit 1 Post-Assessment, Module 4, Session 5
Technology	● See Bridges Educator Website (https://bridges.mathlearningcenter.org/user) for online games, apps, and activities for each Module in Unit

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

Accelerating Learning Unit 1			
Major clusters/standards: 5.NBT.B.6 5.MD.C			
Understand What are the critical prerequisite knowledge and skills students need to access the grade level content? *Indicates a cluster or standard that *may* have received lighter treatment in 20-21.	**Diagnose** What do your students currently know and understand? **Bridges Unit 1 Screener and suggestion below:**	**Take Action** What just in time interventions will support students in engaging with grade level content?	
		Actions to select from, if necessary What does assessment and observation tell me students need in order to access the unit's content? Links to Work Places take you to Instructions. Digital versions of student Work Places are linked as well.	**Student & teacher supports**

*4.NBT.B Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.	Screener items 1-3	● Support for 4.NBT.B.4: 4th gr. Work Place 4C "Roll & Subtract 1,000" Digital version
		● Support for 4.NBT.B.5:Bridges Intervention Volume 6, Modules 2, 5, 7, selected activities
		● Support for 4.NBT.B.6 4th gr. Work Place 6D "Lowest Remainder Wins" Digital version
			Student scaffolds:
			 Base ten area pieces
			 Number pieces app
			 Fact Strategy Posters:
			  English:
			 Multiplication Division
			  Spanish
			 Multiplication Division
			 Anchor chart of properties of operations
			Teacher resources:
			  Models for Multi-Digit Multiplication & Division, p. 6
			 Digital activity for volume & surface area.
			 Utilize Academic Rigor: Supports for English Learners
			 Additional Unit 1 Support & Intervention information.
			Re-engagement opportunities for standards, 5.NBT.B.6 & 5.MD.3-5 see Unit 1 "Skills Across the Grade Levels"

*4.MD.A.3 Apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles...	4th gr. CGA item 40a	● 4th WP 6B "Area & Perimeter" Digital version	

Grade 5 Mathematics Scope and Sequence

5.NF.B.3 Interpret a fraction as division of the numerator by the denominator ($a/b = a \div b$). Solve word problems involving division of whole numbers leading to answers in the form of fractions or mixed numbers,...	5th gr. U2 Post Assessment, item 6 and/or Number Corner Checkup 3, item 11	● Interpret a fraction as division LearnZillion videos
5.NF.B.4a Interpret the product (a/b) × q as a parts of a partition of q into b equal parts; equivalently, as the result of a sequence of operations $a \times q \div b$.	5th U5 Post Assessment, items 1,2,4,5	● 5th Work Places 5A, 5B
5.NF.B.7 Apply and extend previous understandings of division to divide unit fractions by whole numbers and whole numbers by unit fractions….	5th U5 Post Assessment, items 6-8	● Divide a unit fraction by a whole number LearnZillion video

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 70 of the nation's largest urban public-school systems. 105 The organization's Board of Directors is composed of the superintendent, CEO, or chancellor of schools and one school board member from each member city. An executive committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization. The composition of the organization makes it the only independent national group representing the governing and administrative leadership of urban education and the only association whose sole purpose revolves around urban schooling.

The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and to assist its members in to improve and reform. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group also convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies of urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities for areas such as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, instruction, research, and technology. Finally, the organization informs the nation's policymakers, the media, and the public of the successes and challenges of schools in the nation's Great Cities. Urban school leaders from across the country use the organization as a source of information and an umbrella for their joint activities and concerns.

The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961 and has its headquarters in Washington, DC. Since the organization's founding, geographic, ethnic, language, and cultural diversity has typified the Council's membership and staff. The following table lists the Council's history of Strategic Support Teams.

City	Area	Year
Albuquerque		
	Facilities and Roofing	2003
	Human Resources	2003
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2005 & 2018
	Legal Services	2005
	Safety and Security	2007
	Research	2013
	Human Resources	2016
	Special Education	2018
Anchorage		
	Finance	2004
	Communications	2008
	Math Instruction	2010
	Food Services	2011
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Facilities Operations	2015
	Special Education	2015
	Human Resources	2016
Atlanta		
	Facilities	2009

City	Area	Year
	Transportation	2010
	Classified Staffing	2019
	Teaching and Learning	2020
	Student Support Services	2021
Aurora		
	Information Technology	2019
	Curriculum and Instruction	2023
Austin		
	Special Education	2010
Baltimore		
	Information Technology	2011
Birmingham		
	Organizational Structure	2007
	Operations	2008
	Facilities	2010
	Human Resources	2014
	Financial Operations	2015
Boston		
	Special Education	2009
	Curriculum & Instruction	2014
	Food Service	2014
	Facilities	2016
	Special Education	2022
	Safety and Security	2022
	Transportation	2022
Bridgeport		
	Transportation	2012
Broward County (FL)		
	Information Technology	2000
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Information Technology	2012
	Information Technology	2018
	Facilities Operations	2019
	Information Technology	2022
Buffalo		
	Superintendent Support	2000
	Organizational Structure	2000
	Curriculum and Instruction	2000
	Personnel	2000

City	Area	Year
	Facilities and Operations	2000
	Communications	2000
	Finance	2000
	Finance II	2003
	Bilingual Education	2009
	Special Education	2014
	Facilities Operations	2019
Caddo Parish (LA)		
	Facilities	2004
Charleston		
	Special Education	2005
	Transportation	2014
	Finance	2019
Charlotte-Mecklenburg		
	Human Resources	2007
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Transportation	2013
	Information Technology	2022
Cincinnati		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2009
	Special Education	2013
Chicago		
	Warehouse Operations	2010
	Special Education I	2011
	Special Education II	2012
	Bilingual Education	2014
Christina (DE)		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
Clark County		
	Operations	2019
	Special Education	2019
Cleveland		
	Student Assignments	1999, 2000
	Transportation	2000
	Safety and Security	2000
	Facilities Financing	2000
	Facilities Operations	2000
	Transportation	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Safety and Security	2007
	Safety and Security	2008

City	Area	Year
	Theme Schools	2009
	Special Education	2017
Columbus		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Human Resources	2001
	Facilities Financing	2002
	Finance and Treasury	2003
	Budget	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Information Technology	2007
	Food Services	2007
	Human Resources	2020
	Transportation	2020
Dallas		
	Procurement	2007
	Staffing Levels	2009
	Staffing Levels	2016
Dayton		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2001
	Finance	2001
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Budget	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Organizational Structure	2017
Denver		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Bilingual Education	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Common Core Implementation	2014
Des Moines		
	Budget and Finance	2003
	Staffing Levels	2012
	Human Resources	2012
	Special Education	2015
	Bilingual Education	2015
Detroit		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2002
	Assessment	2002

City	Area	Year
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Assessment	2003
	Communications	2003
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Food Services	2007
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Facilities	2008
	Finance and Budget	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Stimulus planning	2009
	Human Resources	2009
	Special Education	2018
East Baton Rouge		
	Human Resources	2021
	Special Education	2022
	Bilingual Education	2022
El Paso		
	Information Technology	2019
Fresno		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
	Special Education	2018
Guilford County		
	Bilingual Education	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Facilities	2004
	Human Resources	2007
	Transportation	2017
Hawaii		
	Financial Operations	2019
Hillsborough County		
	Transportation	2005
	Procurement	2005
	Special Education	2012
	Transportation	2015
Houston		
	Facilities Operations	2010
	Capitol Program	2010
	Information Technology	2011
	Procurement	2011
	Finance	2021
	Safety and Security	2022

City	Area	Year
Indianapolis		
	Transportation	2007
	Information Technology	2010
	Finance and Budget	2013
	Finance	2018
Jackson (MS)		
	Bond Referendum	2006
	Communications	2009
	Curriculum and Instruction	2017
Jacksonville		
	Organization and Management	2002
	Operations	2002
	Human Resources	2002
	Finance	2002
	Information Technology	2002
	Finance	2006
	Facilities operations	2015
	Budget and finance	2015
Kansas City		
	Human Resources	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Finance	2005
	Operations	2005
	Purchasing	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Program Implementation	2007
	Stimulus Planning	2009
	Human Resources	2016
	Transportation	2016
	Finance	2016
	Facilities	2016
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
	Information Technology	2022
Little Rock		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2010
	Curriculum and Instruction	2023
Los Angeles		
	Budget and Finance	2002
	Organizational Structure	2005
	Finance	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Human Resources	2005

City	Area	Year
	Business Services	2005
Louisville		
	Management Information	2005
	Staffing Levels	2009
	Organizational Structure	2018
Memphis		
	Information Technology	2007
	Special Education	2015
	Food Services	2016
	Procurement	2016
Miami-Dade County		
	Construction Management	2003
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Maintenance & Operations	2009
	Capital Projects	2009
	Information Technology	2013
Milwaukee		
	Research and Testing	1999
	Safety and Security	2000
	School Board Support	1999
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Alternative Education	2007
	Human Resources	2009
	Human Resources	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Minneapolis		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Finance	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Transportation	2016
	Organizational Structure	2016
Nashville		
	Food Service	2010
	Bilingual Education	2014
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
Newark		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Food Service	2008
New Orleans		
	Personnel	2001
	Transportation	2002

City	Area	Year
	Information Technology	2003
	Hurricane Damage Assessment	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
New York City		
	Special Education	2008
Norfolk		
	Testing and Assessment	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
	Transportation	2018
	Finance	2018
	Facilities Operations	2018
Omaha		
	Buildings and Grounds Operations	2015
	Transportation	2016
Orange County		
	Information Technology	2010
Palm Beach County		
	Transportation	2015
	Safety & Security	2018
Philadelphia		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Food Service	2003
	Facilities	2003
	Transportation	2003
	Human Resources	2004
	Budget	2008
	Human Resource	2009
	Special Education	2009
	Transportation	2014
	Curriculum and Instruction	2019
	Organizational Structure	2023
Pittsburgh		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Technology	2006
	Finance	2006
	Special Education	2009
	Organizational Structure	2016
	Business Services and Finance	2016
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
	Research	2016

City	Area	Year
	Human Resources	2018
	Information Technology	2018
	Facilities Operations	2018
Portland		
	Finance and Budget	2010
	Procurement	2010
	Operations	2010
Prince George's County		
	Transportation	2012
Providence		
	Business Operations	2001
	MIS and Technology	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Human Resources	2007
	Special Education	2011
	Bilingual Education	2011
	Bilingual Education	2019
Puerto Rico		
	Hurricane Damage Assessment	2017
	Bilingual Education	2019
Reno		
	Facilities Management	2013
	Food Services	2013
	Purchasing	2013
	School Police	2013
	Transportation	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Richmond		
	Transportation	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Human Resources	2014
	Financial Operations	2018
Rochester		
	Finance and Technology	2003
	Transportation	2004
	Food Services	2004
	Special Education	2008
	Human Resources	2022
	Operations	2022
Sacramento		

City	Area	Year
	Special Education	2016
	Human Resources	2022
San Antonio		
	Facilities Operations	2017
	IT Operations	2017
	Transportation	2017
	Food Services	2017
	Human Resource	2018
San Diego		
	Finance	2006
	Food Service	2006
	Transportation	2007
	Procurement	2007
San Francisco		
	Technology	2001
St. Louis		
	Special Education	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Human Resources	2005, 2022
	Transportation	2023
St. Paul		
	Special Education	2011
	Transportation	2011
	Organizational Structure	2017
Seattle		
	Human Resources	2008
	Budget and Finance	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Bilingual Education	2008
	Transportation	2008
	Capital Projects	2008
	Maintenance and Operations	2008
	Procurement	2008
	Food Services	2008
	Capital Projects	2013
	Transportation	2019
Stockton		
	Special Education	2019
Toledo		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005

City	Area	Year
Washington, D.C.		
	Finance and Procurement	1998
	Personnel	1998
	Communications	1998
	Transportation	1998
	Facilities Management	1998
	Special Education	1998
	Legal and General Counsel	1998
	MIS and Technology	1998
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Budget and Finance	2005
	Transportation	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Common Core Implementation	2011
Wichita		
	Transportation	2009
	Information Technology	2017

CURRICULUM, RESEARCH, AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS MEETING

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 9-12, 2024

21ST ANNUAL CURRICULUM, RESEARCH, AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS CONFERENCE

Westin Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL

CONFERENCE THEME: FROM REALITY TO RESULTS: DRIVING IMPROVEMENTS IN URBAN STUDENT OUTCOMES