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Curriculum Writers Handbook

Guidelines and Protocols

Effective Spring 2019
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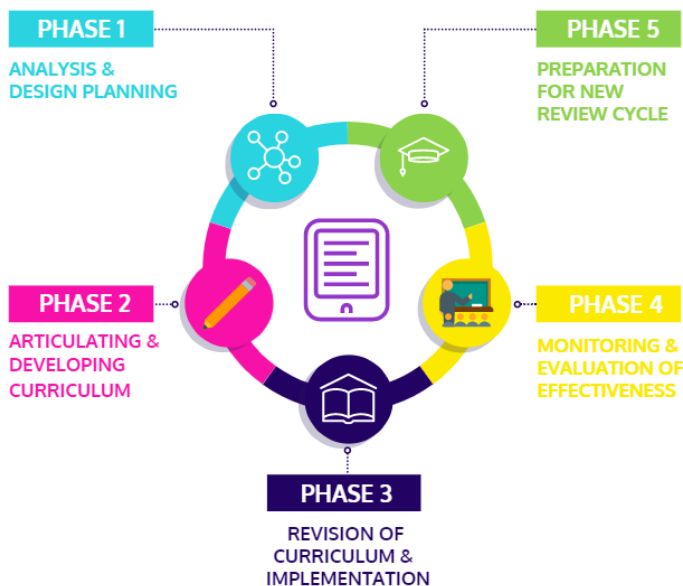
Curriculum Writing Basics

Stafford Public Schools uses a research based series of steps for collaborative teams to follow in order to design curriculum documents (Wiggins, 2007) Curriculum revision is an ongoing collaborative cycle where we write and revise clear, coherent curriculum documents to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment with standards to meet student needs, communicate with families and community, and support teachers as professionals.

A template has been designed for faculty to plan the instructional design of their units of instruction. The template has been developed and adapted based on the guiding principles from the Connecticut State Department of Education. The fields are relevant to ensuring that students have access to high quality teaching and learning that promotes development of skills for college and career.

[Stafford Public Schools Curriculum Design and Planning Template](#)

Collaborative and Teacher-Centered Curriculum Development



Our process is based upon the belief and research that students learn best when their teachers are involved in the process of designing learning experiences. To that end, we wish to make every effort to ensure that those teaching a course or grade level are involved in the process of writing, revising, or reviewing curriculum documents. Teams of teachers will define the scope and sequence of courses, and create the documents from which they will be teaching. Enough room for differentiation should be embedded into each document. While the office of curriculum and instruction will provide guidance, facilitation and feedback based on a collaboratively developed set of criteria. SPS recognizes that curriculum development is a complex and

dynamic process in which review is an essential component. Curriculum revision will follow a five phase development and revision cycle as outlined here.

Understanding By Design

Stafford Public Schools uses a research based series of steps for collaborative teams to follow in order to design curriculum documents (Wiggins, 2007). Guidelines from the Connecticut State Department of Education indicate that districts should utilize a research-based approach to curriculum design and ensure tier one instruction is horizontally and vertically aligned.

Curriculum teams have engaged in collaborative learning about UBD, which requires units to clearly articulate:

1. Desired Results: Where are we going?
2. Assessment Evidence: How will we know how we got there?
3. Learning Plan: How will we get there?

Our backwards design approach will ensure we start with the end in mind, and put together a plan that captures student progress.

Student Centered Instructional Practices

Research around how students learn best continues to showcase the importance of the following, which will be important to consider when designing your units:

- Voice and choice
- Multiple opportunities for feedback
- Authentic problem solving and real-world applications

One way to self-assess your curriculum documents is to examine the types of things students are doing throughout the unit, and apply the [Depth of Knowledge](#) scales. Throughout the unit, students should move toward more complexity in their work, ending at levels 3 and 4 consistently.

The district emphasizes the utilization of the Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Practices Rubric (EQuIP). The [rubrics](#) are designed to assist educators in evaluating the quality and alignment of instructional resources to state and national curricular frameworks. The use of tools such as these should occur during the analysis and research stages of the design process (Phase 1).

Adoption of Core Curricular Resources

Efforts will be made to use existing core resources adopted by the board of education within the last seven (7) years. Texts older than seven years will be evaluated for alignment with existing standards, culturally responsive content, and usability as excerpted material.

Efforts will be made to utilize Open Education Resources, or resources which are available for free to educators across the country in accordance with the standards. Educators should access

the [K-12 Model Curricula Hub](#) to review high impact curricular materials to guide the planning and development process. The CSDE has implemented a platform known as the GoOpen Connecticut platform to organize a digital library of open educational resources.

[GoOpen CT Platform](#)

Throughout the course of writing curriculum documents, writers and teams can and should make recommendations for additional materials which would support implementation, while making efforts to use existing resources where applicable. As new courses and units are adopted, we will make sure we properly supply teachers with the materials they need to help students progress in mastery of the standards.

Copyright and Acceptable Use

All Stafford curriculum documents should be written in accordance with US and state copyright law and acceptable use policies of copyrighted material. In no circumstance should any material or text be cut and pasted from within a curriculum document.

To foster collegiality and collaboration within our state, curriculum documents and materials developed by district personnel may be shared between districts at regional events or communities of practice, for academic or research purposes with institutes of higher education, award committees and other areas with permission from the office of curriculum and instruction, but may not be bartered, sold, or submitted to for-profit websites.

No more than 10% of any copyrighted material may be used. For example, teachers may include up to 10 pages of a 100 page novel as an excerpt for classroom use, but may not photocopy a text in its entirety.

If sample materials are provided by a vendor, those materials should not be reflected within the curriculum document unless the district is intending to purchase. All materials not yet purchased should be outlined in bold if they are not currently owned by the district.

ATLAS Rubicon Curriculum Management System

All completed documents should be submitted through the ATLAS rubicon curriculum management system (www.staffordk12.rubiconatlas.com). Teachers will have access to the system and should complete their collaborative work towards the documents there. As you begin to input information into the fields in ATLAS, an overview guide has been created to assist you in defining what attributes each field must possess and to help ensure consistency across all grade levels and content areas. A copy of this guide has been included on the next page of the manual.

<p><u>Unit Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a brief summary of the unit The enduring understandings being approached Reference and connection to the broader aim of the course (<i>where applicable</i>). 		
<p><u>Standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and identify targeted, assessed standards Identify any supporting standards (standards that are approached or connected to instruction) 		
<p><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <p>Essential questions must possess <i>all</i> of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause genuine and relevant inquiry into big ideas of core content (relate to standards). Provoke deep thought, lively discussion, sustained inquiry, and new understanding as well as further questioning. Require students to consider alternatives, weigh evidence, support their ideas, and justify their answers. Stimulate vital, ongoing rethinking of big ideas, assumptions, prior lessons. Spark meaningful connections with prior learning and personal experiences. 		<p><u>Big Ideas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>why/purpose</i> of learning this unit. Written as complete sentences. No more than 3 or 4 foundational understandings/main ideas, conclusions, or generalizations relative to the units unwrapped concepts.
<p><u>Learning Targets/Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written as “I Can” or SWBAT statements and posted for students. This field may be listed as bullets. 	<p><u>Concepts (Understanding)</u></p> <p>Non-negotiables that need to be addressed in the unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are we learning in this unit? Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cells Pythagorean Theorem Plot and Theme This field may be listed as bullets. 	<p><u>Skills (Do)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are we learning these content topics? Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reason abstractly and quantitatively. Compare and contrast through use of Venn Diagrams. Research and inquiry Modeling phenomenon. Generate oral or written arguments. This field may be listed as bullets.
<p><u>Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should address targeted standards and include a copy of the assessment (link is acceptable). Include formative and summative assessment strategies and have agreed upon by all grade level team members 		
<p><u>Technology Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select from the drop down menu any technology skills introduced or emphasized to support instruction. 	<p><u>Materials and Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any materials, outside of core course texts, that may be necessary to complete suggested instructional practices 	<p><u>Essential Vocabulary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Academic Vocabulary</i>: terms that appear across subject matter. <i>Domain-Specific</i>: words important to the discipline that will support a deeper understanding of concepts.
<p><u>Differentiated Instruction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrichments, scaffolds, and interventions to meet all learners in the classroom. May list strategies utilized. 		
<p><u>Cross Curricular Connections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connections made in the unit to other academic disciplines (<i>if applicable</i>). Science: Link to CCSS for reading, writing, and mathematics practices. 		

Reading and Literacy

The Common Core Standards require frequent opportunities for students to read a wide range of complex texts, and this should occur within many content area units. Please ensure texts are within the appropriate Lexile band for the grade level range. The integration of course materials should demonstrate alignment to culturally responsive instruction. Text and curricular material selection should follow the regulations and guidelines established through *Stafford Board of Education [Policy 6161](#)*.

Submitting Work and Documentation for Compensation

Teachers will receive a curriculum writing orientation session as part of their curriculum writing process. Teachers are eligible to receive payment for curriculum writing at a rate of **\$35** per hour (SEA: 2018-19) for planned completion of a course, unit, or other deliverable.

Teachers should submit a plan for work completion which documents a reasonable amount of hours and specific interval points to submit deliverables to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for feedback. Teachers will submit a record of their curriculum writing activities utilizing the form to submit with purple timesheets. See [Appendix A](#) for the form to submit for curricular timeframe.

Completed work (or links to completed work/ deliverables in ATLAS) must accompany purple timesheets, which are to be submitted on a monthly basis by no later than the 15th of each month, or the previous work day if the 15th falls on a holiday or vacation. Preferably, writers should submit their logs within 2 calendar days of completion of an activity. Failure to accurately record activities or to submit purple sheets and Google form logs may result in postponement of payment until the next monthly cycle.

In-district work sessions completed during the summer or other non-work days as designated “curriculum writing” sessions are eligible for compensation with prior approval. Self-selected professional development or attendance at a Summer institute or after school professional development session does not count towards compensation, nor does time allocated to building/district initiatives or curriculum team meeting time.

Writing and Revision Cycle

Stafford Public Schools uses a research based series of steps for collaborative teams to follow in order to design curriculum documents (Wiggins, 2007). The descriptions of the five phase curriculum development and revision process have been included below. The Curriculum Advisory Council will meet regularly to review artifacts generated by curriculum teams and ensure that the district revision calendar remains current.

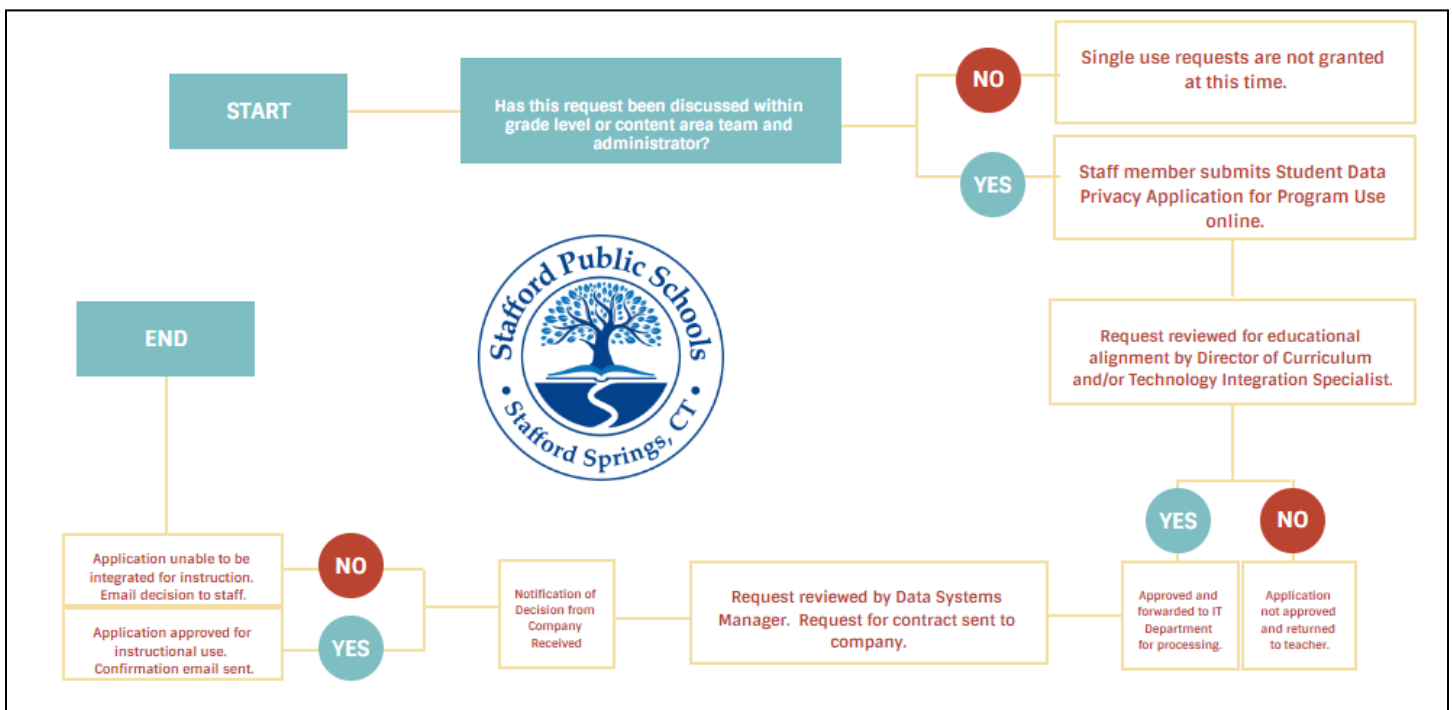
PHASE	ACTION PLAN	SUPPORTING MATERIALS/ DOCUMENTATION
PHASE 1 <i>Analysis and Planning Design (Year 1)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene a curriculum development team to identify curricular needs in alignment with district vision. 2. Engage in study of evidence-based practices and research that promotes high level teaching and learning. 3. Access professional learning to build capacity with content standards, Understanding by Design (UbD), and related instructional practices. 4. Review current curricular framework documents to determine alignment of current curriculum to state and national standards. 5. Identify course-aligned Stafford Public Schools Portrait of the Graduate skills and dispositions. 6. Outline the course learning goals and course overview that reflects the cognitive and affective expectations. 	EQuIP Mathematics Rubric EQuIP K-2 ELA Rubric EQuIP ELA Rubric EQuIP Science Rubric SPS New Course Proposal Form (if new course ONLY)
PHASE 2 <i>Articulating and Developing Curriculum Pilot Implementation (Year 2)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in vertical collaboration to ensure that course themes assure curricular coordination among grades and courses. 2. The curriculum template is created in Rubicon Atlas and populated with a defined scope and sequence documenting the instructional progression. 3. Development of learning targets aligned to content standards with defined skills and content to be addressed. 4. Blueprints of at least ONE common assessment & corresponding rubric developed in Atlas. 5. Submit a draft to the Curriculum Advisory Council for review and feedback. 6. Pilot study of curriculum in classes and collection of teacher feedback. 7. Review and selection of textbooks and other instructional materials for course implementation. 	SPS Curriculum Design & Planning Template SPS Textbook Adoption Form Sensible Assessment Practice Guidelines
PHASE 3 <i>Revision of Curriculum and Implementation (Years 3-4)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teachers are expected to implement the curriculum into practice with students. 2. Teachers administer common assessments and collect relevant data. 3. Ongoing professional development and coaching support for faculty. 4. Calibration of assessments and collection of student anchor sets. 	Curriculum Feedback Form
PHASE 4 <i>Monitoring & Evaluation of Effectiveness (Years 5-6)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect and analyze student work samples to note academic strengths and areas of need through the PLC process. 2. Engage in a minimum of ONE learning walk per school year to gain a snapshot of teaching and learning in practice. 3. Identify and share collective best practices with grade level and curriculum teams. 4. Determine needs for supplemental resources to support differentiation to meet the needs of special education and MLL students.. 5. Analysis of subgroup trends to support closing of achievement gaps utilizing data from the Next Generation Accountability Index. 	EQuIP Student Work Protocol K-2 Literacy Learning Walk Form Mathematics Learning Walk Form Science Learning Walk Form

Technology Applications for Classroom Use

Our district 21st century skills and district technology plan make it impactful to infuse technology into student learning experiences. Documents should reflect multiple opportunities for students to research, write, create, and collaborate using digital platforms.

Curriculum writers should work to research and recommend websites, online platforms, or in some cases suggest online licenses for purchase that meet an identified need as part of the curriculum revision process. It is beneficial when teachers have a voice in selecting materials that they know will engage their students. Part of the feedback process will be on the materials selected for inclusion, which can be linked directly into ATLAS into **“Supplemental Texts and Resources.”** Teachers may include any website which does not require students to login, or collect any personally identifiable data (personally identifiable data includes student writing or work even if no name is linked) unless it has been confirmed that a student data privacy contract has been acquired through the Instructional Technology department.

State law prohibits any use of Personally Identifiable Information without a contract by the board of education. What that means for you is that programs collecting this information which are used in the classroom will need to be vetted and approved before use. This is important because education is increasingly becoming a target of malicious actors. In order to discourage the act of student information getting into the hands of these individuals/groups, we are working to ensure all of our education products meet the state's strict guidelines. The district maintains a list of approved resources. For your reference, a shorter list of curriculum specific resources is included in [Appendix B](#).



Works Cited

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1058007.pdf>

Wiggins, Grant P, Jay McTighe, Leslie J. Kiernan, and Frank Frost. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1998.

Appendices

[Appendix A](#): Curriculum Writing Completion Form (Submit with Purple Timesheets)

[Appendix B](#): Approved List of Online Licenses or Data Compliant Applications for Classroom Use

Appendix C: Adopted Core Textbook Master List (**Currently Under Revision-Spring 2022**)

Appendix D--Recently Acquired Core Texts

School	Subject	Title	Publisher	©	ISBN	QTY	Date purchased	PO #
HS	Science	Global Science, 8th Edition - includes 8 yr online license	Kendall Hunt		978-1-4652-4571-7	5	3/6/2017	171221
HS	Social Studies	AP The Unfinished Nation - 6 Year Bundle	McGraw Hill Co.		978-0-07-680663-8	25	3/6/2017	171224
HS	CTE	Wood Technology	McGraw Hill Co.		978-0-07-894094-1	25	3/6/2017	171223
HS	Business	ePack - Principles of Business, 9th + MindTap	Cengage Learning	2017	9781305946637	15	3/6/2017	171219
HS	Business	Managing Your Personal Finances includes 6 year ebook access	Cengage Learning		9781305076815	40	3/6/2017	171218
HS	Physics	College Physics: A Strategic Approach, AP Edition - includes 8 year digital access	Pearson	2015	9780133539677	15	10/21/2016	170568
HS	Social Studies	United States History - includes Digital courseware 8 yr license	Pearson	2016	9780133336733	16	12/19/2016	170896
HS	Algebra	Financial Algebra - includes 6 yrs access to VS	Cengage Learning	2014	9781305175686113	20	6/14/16	161984
HS	Chemistry	Active Chemistry SE 2nd Edition - includes 8 yr online	It's About Time Publishing	2015	978-1-60720-792-4	100	3/3/2016	161456
HS	Social Studies	American Politics Today - includes 6 year ebook	WW Norton & Co. Inc.		978-0-393-26490-6	15	6/15/2016	162041
HS	Social Studies	Western Civilizations - includes 6 year ebook	WW Norton & Co. Inc.		978-0-393-27157-7	15	6/14/2016	162021
HS	Social Studies	United States History - includes 8 yr online license	Pearson	2016	9780133336733	125	3/30/2016	161450
MS	Social Studies	A History of the United States	McGraw Hill Co.	2016	978-0-07-659943-1	125	6/14/2016	162013
HS	Physics	College Physics, Vol. 1, 10th Edition by Raymond A. Serway and Chris Vuille	Amazon		978-1285737034	4	12/20/2016	170905
HS	TechEd	Residential Construction	Cengage Learning	2016	130508619x	16	6/15/2017	171917
MS	Social Studies	World Geography Student Suite - includes 8 yr online license	McGraw Hill Co.	2014	978-0-07-663513-9	125	3/6/2017	171225
MS	Math	Go Math! Student Interactive Work text, Gr. 6	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	2014	1533685	50	12/16/2015	160956

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MS	Math	Go Math! Student Interactive Work text, Gr. 7	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	2014	1533687	50	12/16/2015	160956
MS	Health	Cus Glencoe Health Student Ed w/Human Sexuality 6 yr online	McGraw Hill Co.		978-0-02-135292-0	25	12/10/2015	160941
MS	Social Studies	World Geography Student Suite - includes 8 yr online license	McGraw Hill Co.	2014	978-0-07-663513-9	125	3/30/2016	161449
MS	Science	Integrated iscience course 1 complete student bundle 6-yr subscription	McGraw Hill Co.	2017	978-0-07-677343-5	40	8/23/2017	1815030
MS	Science	Integrated iscience course 2 complete student bundle 6-yr subscription	McGraw Hill Co.	2017	978-0-07-677260-5	40	8/23/2017	1815030
MS	Science	Integrated iscience course 3 complete student bundle 6-yr subscription	McGraw Hill Co.	2017	978-0-07-677269-8	40	8/23/2017	1815030

Appendix E: Digital Licenses

Name of Web-based Subscription	SHS	SMS	SES	WS
Library Subscriptions				
Gale Virtual Reference Library (GVRL)	X	X	X	X
Destiny Library Manager /Titlepeek online service	X	X	X	X
District Noodletools	X	X	X	X
Scholastic Go!			X	X
Digital Learning/Video Platforms				
Discovery Education	X	X	X	X
Odysseyware	X			
IXL Learning for Math, ELA, World Language	X	X	X	X
Newsela	X	X		
Lexia Learning		X	X	X
Nualang	X	X		
Staff/Student Information Systems				
Naviance	X	X		
TalentEd	X	X	X	X
PowerSchool Analytics	X	X	X	X
Rubicon ATLAS Curriculum Software	X	X	X	X
Assessment Platforms				
STAR Assessments - Accelerated Reader, Freckle	X	X	X	
KUTA Mathematics Software	X			
Typing Agent		X	X	
Reading A-Z, Raz-Kids			X	X
Learning.com		X		
Legends of Learning		X	X	
Productivity Tools				
Adobe Creative Cloud Suite	X	X		
Technical Education Solutions	X			
Turnitin.com	X	X		
Pear Deck	X	X	X	X