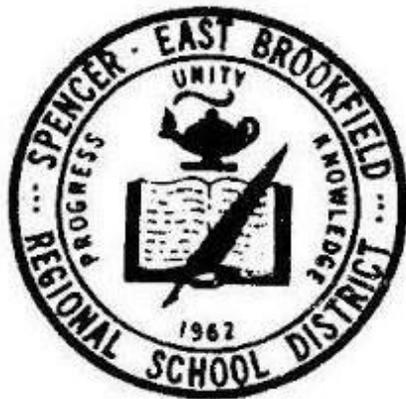


Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District

Curriculum Review Process



Introduction

The Curriculum Review Process provides the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District with a process for the systematic ongoing evaluation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment across all content areas. High-quality, standards-aligned curriculum is essential to supporting the teaching and learning process. Our district believes that exemplary teaching and a high-quality curriculum equip our students with the skills to create solutions for a rapidly changing, technologically rich, and diverse world. Participating in curriculum review provides the opportunity for careful evaluation of our current practice in order to maintain high academic standards and educational opportunities for all students, to align to local, state, and national frameworks, and to remain current with the best instructional practices. Our curriculum review process will be guided by our district vision and beliefs about curriculum.

Our vision of curriculum...

- Curriculum should provide deep, relevant, experiences for students that engage them in meaningful learning
- Curriculum development is an ongoing, collaborative, and dynamic process
- Collaborative curriculum development provides a vehicle for critical conversations about teaching and learning that leads to increase student achievement
- Curriculum must be aligned, cohesive, rigorous, and engage all students
- All stakeholders will engage with curriculum through transparent communication of curriculum expectations

We believe...

- Student learning experiences that are deep, relevant, and meaningful should be evident and living within curriculum and instruction
- Curriculum should represent the district's beliefs about learning
- Curriculum work improves student learning and is the backbone of instruction
- Curriculum design and implementation is an essential component of our professional practice
- The process of writing, reflecting, and revising curriculum is ongoing and collaborative
- Curriculum should be rigorous, engaging, relevant and developed using the UbD model
- Students should be receiving the same common educational experience across the grade levels as a result of a common and cohesive curriculum.

The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is committed to the development and systematic review of a clearly articulated curriculum and instructional program. This commitment manifests itself through the district's curriculum review process. Additionally, this review process is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identify, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including academic programming, athletics, and extracurricular activities.

Curriculum Review Process

The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District will begin a formalized five-year curriculum review cycle in 2019-2020. Development of a curriculum review process is an essential component to maintaining a focus on continuous improvement of student learning. The curriculum review cycle consists of four phases:

1. *Self-Study*: Analysis of the current curriculum and development of action plan
2. *Develop/Redesign*: Development and revision of curriculum
3. *Implement/Monitor*: Implementation and monitoring of curriculum (2 years)
4. *Evaluate*: Evaluation of data/outcomes

Each of these phases is described in further detail later in this document.

Rationale for a Curriculum Review Process

- Ensures that the district has clearly articulated curriculum that is well coordinated through PreK-12
- Provides for an ongoing review and revision of curriculum
- Supports the ongoing use of assessment data to inform and improve curriculum and instructional practices
- Ensures that revisions and updates to curriculum, instruction, and assessment take place to maintain adherence to changes in state and federal mandates, as well as MA Curriculum Frameworks
- Outlines a planned approach towards researching and budgeting for expenditures in curricular materials and professional development
- Evaluates potential needs for curricular or programmatic changes to support student learning

Backward Design to Curriculum

This process of curriculum design and revision is based on the process of backwards design. The foundation of backwards design of curriculum is to determine first, based on our state curriculum standards, what students will know and be able to do and clarify these expectations in a written and communicated curriculum map. The backward design process goes through three stages:

- **Stage 1:** Begins with educators identifying the desired results for learning by establishing learning goals aligned to the MA state frameworks. Stage 1 focuses on identifying “what students will know” and “what students will be able to do.”
- **Stage 2:** Focuses on evidence of learning through the use of assessments. Teachers plan performance tasks, as well as formative and summative assessments to show evidence of student understanding.
- **Stage 3:** Outlines the learning activities that will lead students to the desired results.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Curriculum Review Process (CRP) team may include:

- Superintendent
- High School Principal or Assistant Principal
- Middle School Principal or Assistant Principal
- Elementary School Principal or Designee
- Department Chairs and Curriculum Assistants
- Teachers (minimally 2 per school, preferably 1 per grade level)
- Special Education Teachers
- Specialists

Director of Academic Affairs (or designee)

- Supervises and facilitates the curriculum review process for the district
- Initiates and maintains contact with the CRP team
- Convenes meetings to develop action plans and timelines
- Provides support to the process, including time and resources
- Provides feedback on the documentation materials prepared for the self-study
- Communicates with the Superintendent and the School Committee

Principal/Assistant Principal

- Communicates the district's agreed-upon curriculum and maintains a focus on its implementation
- Provides support and leadership to the curriculum review process by providing needed time and resources

Department Chairs/Curriculum Assistants

- Represents teachers' interests throughout the process
- Coordinates the curriculum documentation for assigned content area and level
- Serves as liaison for PreK-12 vertical meetings
- Maintains an ongoing discussion with assigned faculty regarding the agreed upon curriculum

Teachers

- Develop, write, and revise curriculum throughout curriculum review cycle
- Provide feedback on instructional resources and needed professional development
- Serves as a liaison to colleagues regarding information about the curriculum and the curriculum review process
- Represents other teachers in the process

During the self-study, the **Curriculum Review Process Team** is responsible for:

- Developing essential questions for the study
- Reviewing the articulated curriculum
- Collecting and analyzing relevant documents and data
- Writing the self-study review document
- Developing a proposed action plan in response to the self-study report

Curriculum Review Process Phase Descriptions

Phase 1: Self-Study Time Frame: 10-12 months

During this phase, the team will participate in: 1) Developing essential questions to focus the self-study; 2) Review the district's curriculum and instructional resources; 3) Conduct the self-study.

1. Develop Essential Questions

During this phase, the curriculum review team will develop essential questions that will guide the curriculum evaluation. Members of the curriculum review team will create these in the first month of the process. Essential questions are framed around the following topics:

- Current alignment to frameworks (MA frameworks or appropriate national frameworks)
- Validation of written curriculum
- Program rigor and currency
- Instructional practices (best practices)
- Meeting the needs of all learners
- Student performance
- Review of materials for appropriateness (grade level, balanced view, stereotypes, discriminatory messages)
- Range of student work (multiple proficiency levels)
- Diversity of assessments
- Alignment to the district and school strategic plans

The following list is a starting point for potential essential questions; however, the members of the review team will develop their own questions based off of their own experiences as well.

Vision

- Does the curriculum align with the district's educational vision for students?

Curriculum (Written)

- Is the curriculum written in a common format that meets the district's guidelines for backwards design?
 - Units of study with essential questions, enduring understandings, content, and skills
 - Variety of assessments aligned to standards
 - Instructional strategies
- To what degree is the written curriculum aligned to the state frameworks and standards?
- To what degree does the taught curriculum match the written curriculum?
- To what degree does the curriculum emphasize depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:

- Inquiry and problem-solving
- Higher order thinking
- Cross-disciplinary learning
- Authentic learning opportunities
- Technology enhancement
- Student agency
- To what degree is the curriculum designed for all students to practice and achieve the learning outcomes?
- What are the levels of effective curriculum coordination and vertical articulation within each school and grade span, as well as with sending and receiving schools in the district?

Instruction (Taught Curriculum)

- How do teachers' instructional practices support achievement of learning expectations by:
 - Personalizing instruction
 - Engaging in cross-disciplinary learning
 - Engaging students as active and self-directed learners
 - Emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking
 - Applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
 - Engaging students in self-assessment and reflection
 - Integrating technology
- How do teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of all students?
- How do teachers improve their instructional practice based on data, student work, feedback, research, or collaborative conversations?

Assessment (Learned Curriculum)

- What types of assessment strategies are used and with what frequency?
- How are teachers engaging in analysis of student learning to identify and respond to areas of need?
- To what degree do assessments align with state standards?
- To what degree do teachers use formal processes to collaborate on the creation, analysis, and revision of assessments?
- To what degree are grading practices shared with students and families, including the sharing of rubrics prior to assessments?
- How do teachers and leaders, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice?

Resources for Learning and School Culture

- Does the school have timely and coordinated intervention strategies for all students?
- Does the school's program of studies offer courses that meet the needs of all learners, allowing them to meet and exceed grade level standards?
- To what degree does the student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of students?
- How do leaders support the curriculum, instruction and assessment at each school?
- To what degree is each school equitable and inclusive, ensuring access to challenging academic experiences for all students?

2. Review of Existing Curriculum

This phase of the process involves an in-depth review of the existing curriculum, using the essential questions as guidelines.

- Review and assess current curriculum documents and plan for needed revisions
- Review state/federal mandates and revisions in the MA Curriculum frameworks
- Audit textbook series and instructional materials. Review for appropriateness (i.e., grade level, balanced view, stereotypes)
- Analyze assessment data to inform and improve curriculum and instruction
- Identify evidence-based best practices in the discipline
- Ensure the curriculum is meeting the needs of all learners through differentiated instruction, and student support activities

3. Creation/Revision of a PreK-12 Curriculum Review Document

After a review of existing curriculum, the team will create a K-12 program review document. The CRP Team may complete the work in a variety of settings, such as grade level meetings, staff meetings, departmental meetings, and release time. Elements of this document will include:

- Executive Summary
- Essential Questions
- Statement of Philosophy
- Curriculum Overview
- Findings
- Staff/Parent/Student Data

Also, part of this process includes the collection and analysis of assessment data, student work samples, budget information, staffing information, and professional development activity. (See template in appendix).

4. Collection and Organization of Other Relevant Data

- Assessment data (district, school, departments, MCAS, benchmark assessments)
- Budget information/resources - previous two years
- Staffing information
- Professional development activities
- Student work samples
- Survey data

5. Teacher Validation of the PreK-12 Curriculum (2 months)

Under the direction of the Curriculum Review Process Team, teachers review and evaluate the self-study information and their curriculum to validate them as being representative of the current state of curriculum and instruction.

6. Action Planning (2 months)

At the conclusion of the self-study the curriculum review process team will design an action plan for the curriculum under review. This plan will establish short- and long-range goals for professional

development and outline proposed changes in the curriculum. Projected budgetary needs will be outlined in this plan as well. See the Action Plan template in the Appendix for guidelines.

Curriculum Review Process Self-Study Timeline

Months	Activity
September - October	Superintendent & Director of Academic Affairs convenes the CRP Team
October - November	Draft essential questions and begin self-study review
November - February	Review of existing curriculum and begin writing self-study draft
February - March	Teachers validate the draft of the self-study
March - April	Self-study finalized, including findings and recommendations
April - May	Present study to the School Committee
May - June	Draft of action plan and review of action plan
July - August	Action plan finalized

Phase 2: Develop/Redesign Timeframe: 10-12 months

Phase 2 of the Curriculum Review Process is to develop and redesign the curriculum documents and to begin implementation of the action steps put into place by the self-study action plan. Elements of the development and redesign of curriculum may include:

- Identify/Revise: Scope and Sequence, Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, Content, Skills, Assessments, and Learning Activities
- Research, pilot, and recommend evidence-based instructional materials
- Propose and present new course to curriculum leadership team and publish new curriculum document for community
- Identify ongoing professional development needs

Phase 3: Implement/Monitor Timeframe: 2 years

Phase 3 of the Curriculum Review Process is to implement the revised curriculum and instructional practices, continue with professional development support, and to monitor progress towards intended results. Some of the steps in Phase 3 include:

- Implement the revised curriculum, instructional practices, and resources
- Provide materials and professional development for the curriculum
- Provide mentoring, coaching, modeling, and grade-level support
- Ensure alignment of the intended, taught, and assessed curriculum
- Monitor data and progress towards intended results

Phase 4: Evaluate Timeframe: 10-12 months

Phase 4 of the Curriculum Review Process is to use assessment data and to assess the effectiveness of current curriculum, instruction, and assessments. This evaluative phase leads into the launch of the self-study in the following year.

- Use assessment data on an ongoing basis to inform and improve curriculum and instruction.
- Monitor and assess the implementation and effectiveness of the existing curriculum, textbooks and instructional materials used.

APPENDIX

Contents Include:

1. Self-Study Template
2. Action Plan Template
3. Curriculum Review Cycle
4. Curriculum Review Rubric
5. References

Self-Study Template

1. Executive Summary (1-2 Pages)
2. Introduction
3. Committee Organization
 - Includes members of the committees
4. Essential Questions
 - Lists the essential questions developed for the study
5. Philosophy of curricular area (by building)
6. Curriculum Overview (By grade and guided by essential questions)
 - Overview by buildings/grade levels
 - Time on learning
 - Summary of alignment or gaps in relation to standards
7. Assessments
 - School assessment data
 - Survey Data
8. Staffing Levels and Needs
9. Professional Development

10. Strengths (By Building/Grade Level)

11. Areas of Opportunity (By Building/Grade Level)

12. Conclusion

Action Plan Template

1. Introduction

2. Review of Self Study

3. Response to Strengths

4. Response to Areas of Opportunity

5. Implementation and timeline of short-term and long-term recommendations

6. Action plan with actions/who is responsible/timeline/benchmarks/resources needed

Sample Action Plan:

Actions	Who is Responsible	Timeline	Benchmarks	Resources Needed

Curriculum Review Cycle (Tentative*)

Curriculum Focus Area	Phase 1 Self-Study Action Planning	Phase 2 Develop/Redesign	Phase 3 Implement/Monitor Yr 1	Phase 3 Implement/Monitor Yr 2	Phase 4 Evaluate
ELA	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Math Science	2018 - 2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Art Social Studies	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Wellness (Health/PE) Technology	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
ELL Music	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
World Language Library Guidance	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027

**This timeline may need to be adapted as based on internal/external influences such as changes in assessment systems, district initiatives, or new state frameworks.

Curriculum Review Rubric

	Underdeveloped	Developing	Proficient	Well-Developed
Alignment to standards and 21st Century skills	Curriculum Units do not show evidence of alignment to state standards, national standards, WIDA or 21 st century skills.	Curriculum Units show some evidence of alignment to state standards, national standards, WIDA, or 21 st century skills.	Curriculum Units are mostly aligned to state standards, national standards, WIDA, and 21 st century skills.	Curriculum Units are fully aligned to state standards, national standards, WIDA, and 21st century skills.
UbD alignment	Units show none of the UbD design standards and do not consist of three stages (Desired Results, Assessment Evidence, Learning Plans).	Units show some of the UbD design standards, and consist partially of the three stages (Desired Results, Assessment Evidence, Learning Plans).	Units meet most of the UbD design standards, and consist of the three stages (Desired Results, Assessment Evidence, Learning Plans).	Units meet all of the UbD design standards, and consist of the three stages (Desired Results, Assessment Evidence, Learning Plans).
Evidence of instructional shifts and higher-order thinking	Evidence of the instructional shifts required by the frameworks are not apparent. Learning activities do not typically emphasize rigorous habits or higher-order thinking skills.	Evidence of the instructional shifts required by the frameworks are inconsistently apparent. Learning activities sometimes emphasize rigorous habits or higher-order thinking skills.	Evidence of the instructional shifts required by the frameworks are mostly apparent. Learning activities often emphasize rigorous habits or higher-order thinking skills.	Evidence of the instructional shifts required by the frameworks are consistently apparent. Learning activities emphasize rigorous habits or higher-order thinking skills.
Assessments and Student Self-Assessments	Few high-quality-assessments are evident. Assessments are not used to drive instruction. Little to no evidence of student self-assessment.	Some high quality-assessments are evident and sometimes are used to drive instruction. Student self-assessments are somewhat evident.	High-quality assessments are mostly evident and are used frequently to drive instruction. Student self-assessments are mostly evident.	High-quality assessments are evident and utilized to drive instruction. Student self-assessments are evident.
Differentiation of Instruction and Universal Design for Learners	There is little to no evidence of Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, or practices, which would	There is some evidence of Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, or practices, which would lead to a culturally	Majority of evidence shows differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, or practices, which lead to a culturally proficient	There is abundant evidence of differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and practices, which lead to a culturally proficient learning

	lead to a culturally proficient learning community.	proficient learning community.	Learning community.	community.
Modern learning practices	There is minimal evidence in curriculum and practices of student agency, personalization, relevant and authentic learning, blended learning, and meaningful tech enhancements.	There is some evidence in curriculum and practices of student agency, personalization, relevant and authentic learning, blended learning, and meaningful tech enhancements.	Majority of evidence shows curriculum and practices of student agency, personalization, relevant and authentic learning, blended learning, and meaningful tech enhancements.	Abundant evidence in curriculum and practices of student agency, personalization, relevant and authentic learning, blended learning, and meaningful tech enhancements.

References

This Curriculum Review Process Guide was adapted from the following districts:

- Ashland Public Schools
- Cambridge Public Schools
- Holliston Public Schools
- Leicester Public Schools
- Mendon-Upton Regional Schools
- Medway Public Schools
- Westborough Public Schools

For more information on the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Curriculum Expectations go to: <https://www.sebrsd.org>