

# OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & REVISION PLAN

# 2020 - 2025

Silvia Ouellette



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>District Vision .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Overview of Curriculum Plan.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Purpose of a Curriculum Review and Development Plan .....	3
Alignment of the Written, Taught and Tested Curriculum.....	4
High Quality Instruction .....	4
<b>Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Curriculum Writing and Implementation....</b>	<b>5</b>
Board of Education .....	5
District Administration Leadership .....	5
Curriculum and Instruction Committee.....	6
School Building Leadership .....	6
Curriculum Writing Teams.....	6
Teachers .....	7
<b>Curriculum Development Process.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Review and Research .....	8
Curriculum Development and Design .....	9
Implementation .....	9
Monitor .....	9
<b>Student Assessment.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix A: Curriculum and Instruction Committee.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix B: Development and Review Cycle.....</b>	<b>13</b>

## OUR VISION

In progress...

## OUR MISSION

In progress...

## CORE VALUES

*Teaching and Learning are more successful when...*

*All Stakeholders...*

- Collaborate to shape the future of each school.
- Cultivate positive relationships to support student growth.
- Demonstrate empathy and kindness, accept others' differences, and listen with understanding.
- Communicate with clarity and purpose individually or collaboratively, and publicly.

*All Students...*

- Invest in their personal growth, are accepted and valued by others, and are empowered to make decisions.
- Engage in authentic experiences across content areas that extend beyond the walls of the classroom in order to participate as responsible members in the local, national, and global community.
- Demonstrate a commitment to learning.
- Practice healthy behaviors that promote wellness and fitness.

*All Educators...*

- Create clear learning goals based on success criteria and provide feedback with targeted interventions.
- Base instruction on specific student needs, interests, strengths, and ways of learning.
- Collaborate, examine student work, and collectively address the academic, social, and emotional needs of all learners.
- Develop opportunities for classroom discussion and problem solving.
- Reflect and strive to improve their practice.
- Pursue opportunities for personal growth in meeting professional standards.

# OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM PLAN

A curriculum can be broadly described as the learning experiences that occur in our classrooms and schools. Some definitions of curriculum emphasize what is taught in our classrooms. Other definitions refer to a planned sequence of instruction or the intended learning points across grade levels and courses. We like the idea that a curriculum is centered around what students learn when they are guided by skilled teachers, essential questions, and engaging experiences.

When we develop curriculum, we always start with the same blueprint. We look at the needs of our students, consider research in a particular field, examine learning needs in the 21st century, and look to state and national standards to shape our students' learning experiences.

A high quality curriculum should also include planned interactions with students, teaching points for teachers, instructional content, resources, and processes for evaluating student learning. Therefore, we research and approve textbooks and resources that supplement our curriculum planning. Our curriculums include the following components:

- **Front matter**
- **Standards**
- **Essential questions**
- **Big ideas/enduring understandings**
- **Learning targets or teaching points**
- **Scope and sequence**
- **Benchmark Assessments and performance tasks**

Since the curriculum is the district's formal plan to ensure students graduate with career and college ready skills, it needs to correspond to the district's beliefs, expectations for student learning, and instructional practices that we require our teachers to provide.

## PURPOSE OF A CURRICULUM REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The purpose of a curriculum review and development plan is to have a collaborative and continuous process in place in which the district is able to evaluate learning expectations in a systematic and data driven manner. It allows for the district to align curriculum with state and national standards as they adapt and change. We can also plan budget dollars to support resource allocation and teacher training. Curriculum plans need to be seen as living documents that require frequent review. In order to plan for this reflection, a timetable is a useful tool to determine when curriculums are developed and revised. Alignment alone is not enough to make a curriculum coherent. The plan needs to describe how curriculum is implemented in the classrooms. Each curriculum should not only provide teachers with the 'what' but also the 'how' of teaching and learning. This is achieved by developing a front matter that articulates best practices and pedagogy associated with a field of study.

# ALIGNMENT OF THE WRITTEN, TAUGHT & TESTED CURRICULUM

Curriculum needs to be designed with the intended learning outcomes of Oxford Public School's students in mind. The ultimate goal is to align the written, taught, and tested curriculum. When all three work in harmony with one another and are supported with professional learning support for teachers, student learning will thrive.

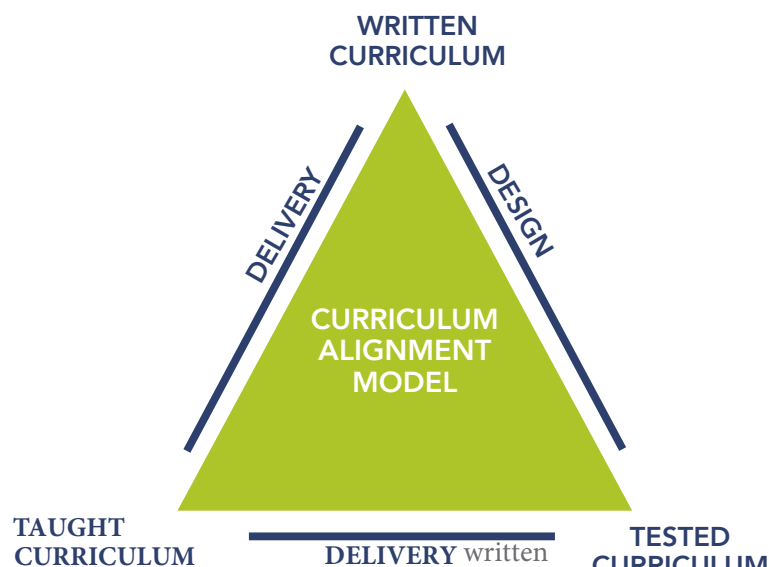
## *The written curriculum* gives

teachers a roadmap of the expectations of each unit. Teachers understand the end goal of the curriculum through standards, essential questions, enduring understandings, and learning targets detailed in the documents. These features identify what students should learn and be able to do from each unit.

*The taught curriculum* is how the teachers deliver lessons that achieve the goals of the unit. It is the path teachers take to guide students toward the intended learning outcomes. The taught curriculum closely resembles research in each field.

For instance, a workshop approach starts with a mini-lesson and gradually releases responsibility to each student through independent work and feedback.

*The tested curriculum* consists of benchmarks and standardized assessments that are in place at the school, district, and the state/national levels to ensure students reach the intended learning standards.



## HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION

High quality instruction aims to include four key ingredients. First, teachers need to provide students with clear learning goals. Second, students need to know the success criteria for these goals so they can monitor their own learning and make adjustments when needed. Third, students can select tools and resources to guide their own learning or seek feedback when needed. Finally, teachers need to provide high quality feedback to students which affect student goal setting, self-regulation, and learning.

In the past few years, our curriculum documents have evolved to describe not just **what** teachers should instruct, but also **how** they drive learning in the classroom. In short, we can accelerate student learning when our instructional strategies, resources, curriculum documents, and assessment practices align.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING CURRICULUM WRITING & IMPLEMENTATION

In order for the curriculum review and development plan to take shape, there must be a strong team in place to help guide the process. It is essential to identify key people at the district and school levels to help support the work while offering clear and meaningful roles for participants.<sup>1</sup>

Developing and maintaining a current and rigorous curriculum is the shared responsibility of educators in the Oxford school district. By increasing participation and engaging many stakeholders in the process, a usable document is created that meets the visionary beliefs of the district and the ever-changing needs of its learners.

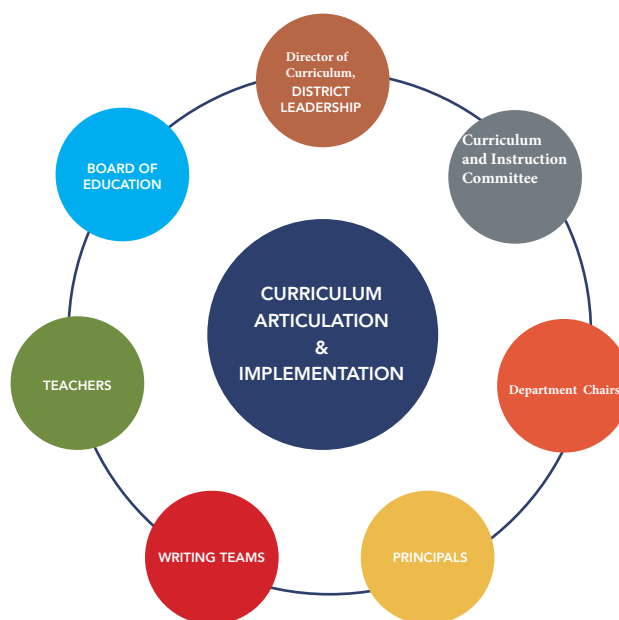
## *Board of Education*

The curriculum subcommittee studies curriculum, courses, and textbooks that are recommended by the administration. The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment works with the curriculum subcommittee Chair to develop agenda items each month. The committee recommends curriculum to the full Board for consideration. The Board of Education recognizes that curriculum development is an ongoing process and helps ensure that curriculum is developed, approved, taught, and assessed. Once curriculum is adopted by the Board of Education, teachers are required to teach the curriculum in the manner that will have the greatest impact on student learning. Finally, the Board approves policy related to curriculum development and delivery to support the Superintendent and Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment in overseeing curriculum implementation.

## *District Administration Leadership*

The District Administration has four primary functions in curriculum leadership. First, curriculum needs to be vertically and horizontally aligned Pre-K to 12. This coordination occurs on each grade level and department where common content is taught. Second, teachers need high quality resources that support curriculum implementation.

In some cases a resource may consist of a textbook or other instructional materials. The district is responsible for ensuring that teachers have these resources available to them. Third, the district administration will facilitate and plan professional learning activities to ensure faculty can implement the curriculum with fidelity. Finally, district administration needs to ensure that budget funds are available to support curriculum development, resource allocation, and adequate training for faculty.



<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Getting Results with Curriculum Mapping* by Heidi Hayes Jacobs



## CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee is a district wide Pre-K to 12 committee comprised of teachers, specialists, and administrators. This committee monitors the development of curriculum implementation, curriculum planning, and curriculum revision. It also ensures that curriculum is aligned to state standards and connected across disciplines. The evaluation of existing curriculum and programs is a key responsibility. The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment chairs the Committee which meets every other month per year. Appendix A lists the current members of the committee.

### *Responsibilities of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee*

- Monitors the curriculum review cycle and sets annual goals for curriculum writing teams.
- Serves as a “think tank” for new and emerging ideas, trends, and research in the field.
- Evaluates existing curriculum for vertical articulation and alignment to state standards.
- Collaborates with the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) to identify/support professional learning in the district.

### *School Building Leadership*

School principals are the instructional leaders in our schools. It is their responsibility to work closely with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is delivered at the school level. As a result, principals need a working knowledge of the curriculum and the instructional practices that have the greatest impact on student learning. Principals monitor the delivery of the district curriculum through some common techniques which include:

- Frequent classroom walkthroughs.
- Leadership and participation in vertical team meetings.
- Informal and formal classroom observations.
- Periodic review of lesson plans and curriculum documents.
- Working with teachers to review and interpret assessment data and student work.

### *Curriculum Writing Teams*

Curriculum writing teams are established to write specific curriculum for a grade level or course. While these teams are led by the curriculum coordinator or Assistant Superintendent, members are teachers because they are closest to the work and content experts. In addition to developing curriculum or ensuring that a scope and sequence follows a natural progression, curriculum writing teams can also develop assessments or focus on a specific task. Generally, these teams are ad hoc and have a clear focus for a defined period of time.





## Teachers

Teachers are responsible for delivering the district curriculum and using the instructional practices that are most effective for students. These practices are described in the front matter of each curriculum. Our instructional practices are research-based and described in the CT Common Core of Teaching (CCT) rubric for effective teaching. Teachers also assess learning with a variety of state, district, and classroom assessments. Information from formative assessments needs to drive instructional decisions in the classroom and involve students in the learning process. As the district moves towards assessing standards in all disciplines, teachers communicate strengths and weaknesses to students and parents.

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Curriculum development is an ongoing cycle. As research emerges, technology improves, and expectations for college and career-ready graduates evolve, district curriculum must continue to improve and change based on the needs of our learners. District curriculum must be analyzed and designed in a collaborative, systematic manner that not only produces a strong curriculum document, but allows for revision and reflection, support for teachers to implement curriculum with fidelity, and an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the curriculum at the end of the cycle.

Based on the work and research of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, a backwards design approach to curriculum development begins with identifying the desired results.<sup>3</sup> Units are designed to help students develop a deep understanding of the concepts that are taught. The focus is on understanding rather than simply covering curriculum.<sup>4</sup> During the curriculum development process, the curriculum team will use the work of Wiggins and McTighe to drive their early planning:

- 1. Identify desired results.**
- 2. Determine assessment evidence.**
- 3. Incorporate learning experiences and instruction.**

The curriculum development and review cycle is a four-part process that takes place over the course of five to six years. The key components of the cycle include a period of review and research, curriculum development and design, implementation, and a monitoring period. This cycle can be seen in Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from *Understanding by Design* by Grant Wiggins

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *Align the Design* by Mooney & Mausbach

## *Review and Research*

During this stage, the curriculum committee is formed to assess existing curriculum as well as instructional materials being used. The committee reviews research, examines national and state trends, and revisits the scope and sequence of the standards. The committee compares the current district programs to the “ideal” program or programs used within other high achieving districts. When available, site visits of alternative programs are taken by team members. Also during this stage, the committee reviews standardized and district assessment data to identify strengths and weaknesses of the current program. Feedback from different stakeholder groups (i.e. staff, students, parents) can be taken into account at this stage of the curriculum cycle. An early plan to develop a budget for necessary resources and Board of Education approval for textbooks take place during this stage.







## *Curriculum Development and Design*

This process begins by establishing a shared vision for the curriculum. The vision reflects the mission statement and the shared values the district believes in for its learners. After a vision is established, the committee investigates program options that match the vision. It may be a time when different program options and learning strategies are piloted and brought back to the table for discussion.

At this stage, smaller curriculum writing teams and content experts frame the scope and sequence of the curriculum. As the team works on the sequence for the curriculum, they also define what students should know and be able to do as a result of the written curriculum. They select the best instructional materials, strategies, pedagogy, and assessments to drive student learning. Most important, the writing team develops benchmarks that define program and student success.

## *Implementation*

Curriculum is put into action during this stage. Teachers use the curriculum to guide instruction within their classrooms. During implementation, staff are provided with training and professional development on necessary learning strategies and assessment practices for teachers and students to succeed with the curriculum. Checkpoints are established to gather feedback on the curriculum allowing for reflection and adjustment. During this time, the evaluation process for the program and student outcomes are put into action and baseline data are collected.

## *Monitor*

During this stage, the curriculum is in full implementation with teachers using it to drive instruction. Data are collected to use in evaluation of the program. Monitoring of the curriculum continues during this stage while adjustments are made when necessary. The committee continues to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum in action while providing necessary professional development to the staff.



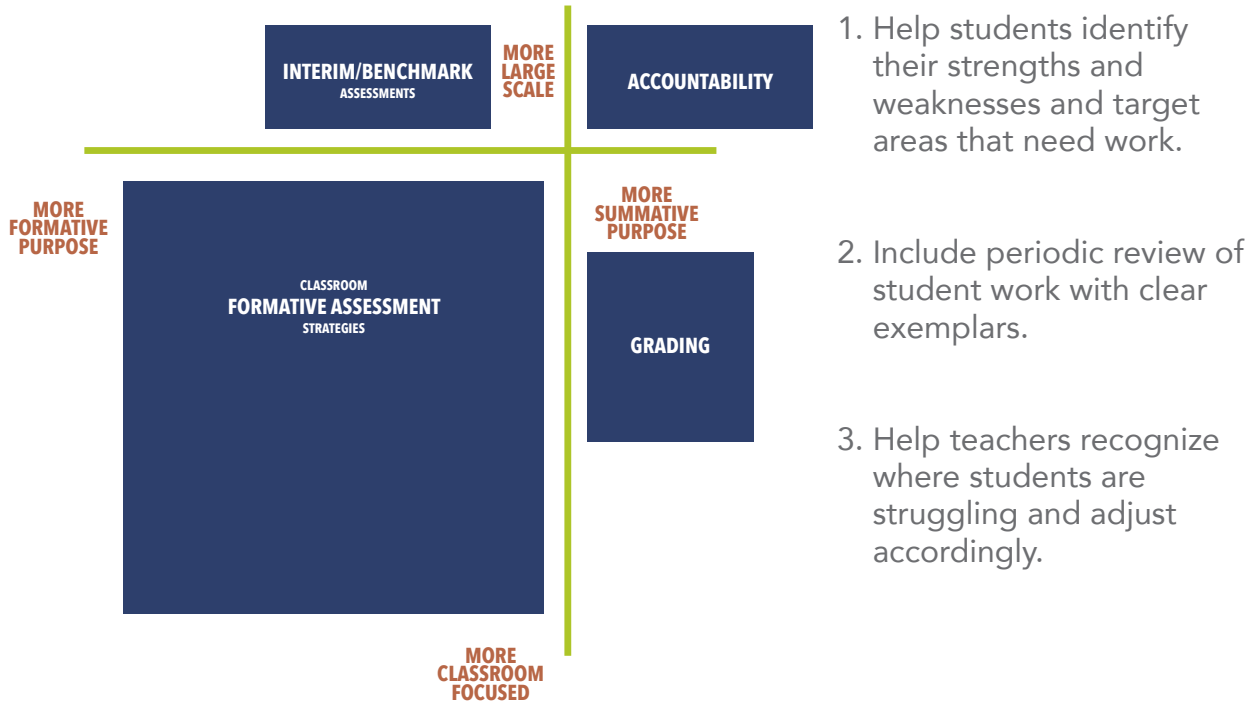
## *Student Assessment*

Assessments evaluate learning while informing instruction. Assessment is a reflective and informative tool for teachers, administrators, and students. It provides ongoing and varied opportunities to demonstrate acquisition of knowledge and skills. Strong assessment practices include routine checks for understanding, multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning, and a variety of assessment types for all learners that included benchmark and formative assessments.

Benchmark assessments provide a view of where students have been, where they are, and where they are going. They are also used to identify students who require interventions as part of our universal screening process. Formative assessment is used to monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback to teachers to improve their teaching, facilitate collaborative planning, and improve student learning.

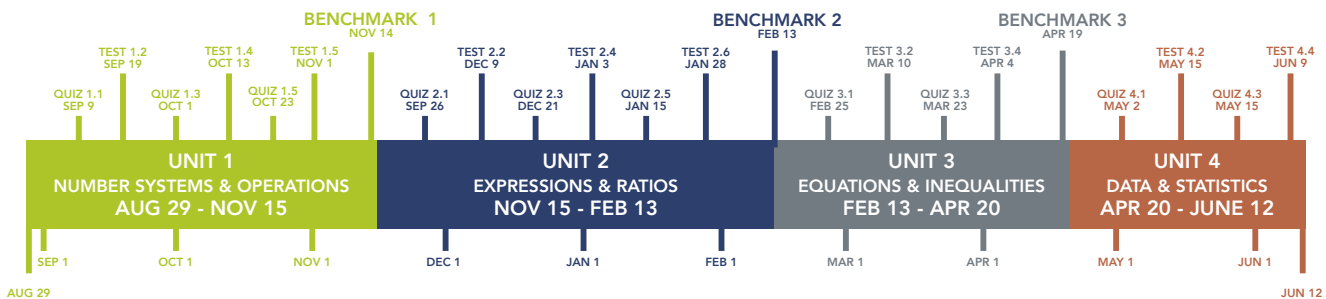
We need to consider which assessments are more impactful on student learning. Figure 1 illustrates that more time should be allocated to classroom formative assessment because it provides more timely feedback to students and more relevant information for teachers. Therefore, teachers use this method of assessment more frequently in their planning compared to the other types of assessments that are available.

Meaningful classroom assessments have the following three objectives, which is emphasized in the image below. <sup>5</sup>



**Figure 1** Impact of Assessment on Instruction by Type

Finally, assessments are clearly defined and identified within each curriculum. Our documents define when major benchmark and performance assessments should occur within a unit or between units of instruction so we can track student performance and measure curriculum implementation. The below diagram (Figure 2) illustrates when assessments are scheduled in one of our math curriculums.



**Figure 2** Sample Math Assessment Calendar



## APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Faculty Name	Position	School or Department
Silvia Ouellette	Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	District Wide
Kristin Cook	Kindergarten Teacher	Quaker Farms School
Karen Conlin	Grade Three Teacher	Oxford Center School
Aaron Reich	Grade Four Teacher	Oxford Center School
Lisa Nicholas	Reading Specialist	Quaker Farms School
Nancy Cersonsky	Grade Five Teacher	Oxford Center School
Kirsten Stone	Grade Six Social Studies	Oxford Middle School
Heather Malash	Grade Six Math	Oxford Middle School
Corey Evans	High School English	Oxford High School
Maegan Plavnick	Special Education Teacher	Oxford High School

## APPENDIX B: DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW CYCLE

<i>Curriculum Area</i>	2020 2021	2021 2022	2022 2023	2023 2024	2024 2025	2025 2026
Career and Technology Education (CTE) 6-12	CD	Imp	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon
Early Childhood (ELC & PreK)	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	CD
English Language Arts K-5	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	Imp
English Language Arts 6-12	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	Imp
Fine Arts K-12	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	CD
Enrichment	RR	RR	CD	Imp	Mon	Mon
Library/Media/Technology	RR	CD	CD	Imp	Mon	Mon
Capstone	RR	CD	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon
Mathematics K-5	RR/CD	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR
Mathematics 6-12	RR/CD	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR
Physical Education/Health K-12	RR	RR	CD	Mon	Mon	Mon
School Counseling	CD	Imp	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon
Science K-5	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	Imp
Science 6-12	Imp/Mon	Mon	Mon	RR	CD	Imp
Social Studies K-5	RR	CD	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR
Social Studies 6-12	CD	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon	RR
World Language 6-12	CD/Imp	CD/Imp	Imp	Mon	Mon	Mon

### *Key:*

RR = Review and Research

CD = Curriculum Development and Design

Imp = Implementation

Mon = Monitor



