A VISION OF LEARNING:
Creating a 21st century education for
Oak Lawn-Hometown District 123 students

Common Core Standards Adoption and Implementation Plan
for the 2010-2013 School Years

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) presents an opportunity to re-examine the current system of educational assessments and address their deficiencies (McTighe, 2010). The effect of high stakes assessments has resulted in many school districts shifting focus from resource rich curriculum and best practice instruction to a focus on what is tested, thus diminishing the standards and subject areas that are not assessed. In many instances, this has led to the narrowing of curriculum and in-depth instruction necessary for meaningful student learning. In addition, the broad scope of many state learning standards has caused teachers to quickly “cover” massive amounts of material rather than utilizing in-depth instructional strategies that spend adequate time and resources necessary to uncover content. Marzano (2010) indicates that it would require 400 school days to effectively teach the content found in a single year’s worth of current state standards. With this impossibility in mind, it is important for a school system to identify the skills and content critical for students to acquire yearly and then provide rich, in-depth instruction that is designed for student understanding and transfer, which in turn, creates 21st century learners.

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

A successful 21st century education prepares students to be successful, contributing citizens in the context of today’s global society. Success in the 21st century requires students to understand how to learn independently. It is necessary to develop strong critical thinking and interpersonal communication skills, both written and oral, in order to be successful in an increasingly fluid, interconnected, and complex world. 21st century skills learned through our curriculum will become increasingly more interdisciplinary, integrated, project-based and technology enhanced. Instruction will focus on the development and use of skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, written and oral communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation. 21st century learning builds upon such past conceptions of learning as “core knowledge in subject areas” and recasts them for today’s world and today’s learners where a global perspective and collaboration are critical skills (McLeod, 2010).

The Role of Technology in 21st Century Learning: Technology allows for 24/7 access to information, constant social interaction, and easily created and shared digital content. In this setting, educators can leverage technology to create an engaging and personalized environment to meet the emerging educational needs of our current generation. No longer does learning have to be one-size-fits-all or confined to the classroom. The opportunities afforded by technology should be used to re-imagine how we educate student in District 123, focusing on preparing students to be learners for life. It is important for our students to learn in a global classroom, acknowledging that the classroom extends beyond the physical walls. Our students are more inclined to find information by accessing the Internet through cellphones and computers or chatting with friends on a social networking site. If this is the case, it is necessary to embrace this highly motivational interest and embed it in our teaching. As our digital capacity expands and our training in technology use grows, our teachers will begin to utilize technology to better meet the needs and interests of students though technology application and instruction. At some point in time, our staff will be more able to instruct, monitor student learning and issue assignments via virtual digital classrooms, thus allowing more time to interact with students and provide feedback for learning.

21st century learning will ultimately be “learner-driven”. The former education models of factory-model, top-down, compliance-driven no longer suit the needs of 21st century learners. 21st century learning shouldn’t be controversial or difficult to achieve; it’s simply an effort to define modern learning using modern tools. 21st century learning does not displace the traditional, core learning of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but rather, engages them in a more deep, engaging manner with relevant tools, technologies, and methodologies to meet the needs of 21st century learners.
FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

Over the course of the 2010-2013 school years, Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 will adopt and implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as its foundational curriculum and means to develop an educational approach that aligns with the demands of 21st century outcomes. The process will utilize three important frameworks introduced below:

1. Larry Ainsworth’s Power Standards: This framework will provide a systematic approach involving teachers and administration working together collaboratively to examine the CCSS and identify the critical skills and knowledge each student should master in a given grade level and content area.

2. Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe’s Understanding by Design (UbD): This framework provides a curriculum design approach that begins with the end in mind. The UbD approach involves planning units and lessons by beginning with the desired outcomes or standards, followed by determining the evidence necessary for understanding and transfer (authentic assessment), and finally, planning the learning activities necessary to achieve the understandings and transfer.

3. Richard DeFour’s Professional Learning Community (PLC): This framework provides training in collaboration to maintain a focus on teaching and learning. In the PLC model, teachers use planning time to examine student data and discuss what the data reveal regarding instructional practice. Thus, assessment data (formative and summative) inform teacher planning and instruction, and ultimately, student learning. The PLC model also stresses the importance for continuous improvement whereby teachers continually discuss and experiment with different instructional strategies in an attempt to increase classroom effectiveness.

In Summary: Collectively, these frameworks, along with efforts of all staff, will serve to create a K-8 standards-based curriculum implemented with fidelity, a rich, in-depth learning experience for students, and differentiated planning and instruction that is intended to meet the needs of each District 123 student.

MISSION

As we know, most learners are not stimulated by mere content coverage, rote learning, skill drills, or test prep exercises. The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are
expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to assist students in their education. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. The adoption of the CCSS also provides an opportunity for District 123 to unify our teaching and leaning approaches and connect them to one central theme. By implementing the CCSS, utilizing Power Standards, UbD, and PLC, District 123 students will be better positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

ORGANIZATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Although there are a number of effective educational frameworks guiding reform in the United States, there are three research-based frameworks that will be utilized to guide the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards:

1. Power Standard Development (Reeves and Ainsworth)
2. Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe)
3. Professional Learning Communities (DeFour & Eaker).

Each framework addresses particular aspect of the overall process. However, the three frameworks will utilize a synergistic approach to guide the adoption and implementation process. The first is to develop Powers Standards (Ainsworth and Reeves, 2003), which will drive standards-based curriculum development that aims to use a backward design to create a K-8 curriculum. The goal in curriculum development is to develop assessment and learning activities based on student understandings or Power Standards and application/transfer facets derived from the desired outcomes (UbD). The entire process will occur as a result of systems collaboration and a desire for continuous improvement (PLC Framework).

I. Developing Power Standards, Assessment & Learning Activities

Power Standards, as defined by Dr. Doug Reeves of the Center for Learning Leadership and further developed by his colleague, Dr. Larry Ainsworth, are a prioritized set of state standards and expectations that are critical for student success. Power Standards should represent a synthesis of the most essential “big ideas” from the Common Core State Standards. They are the backbone of a guaranteed, viable curriculum and form a “safety net” of standards that are representative of what we will determine as the ultimate learning goals for all students to achieve.

The Power Standards development process will begin with a group of D123 educators (teachers, administrators and identified design experts). The process will be facilitated by the Curriculum Design Team (CDT) who will utilize a consensus building process to arrive at the essential standards and grade-level indicators based on three identification criteria:
• **Endurance** - Is the knowledge and skill essential in order to be proficient in this area beyond a single test (i.e., is there life-long value to this knowledge/skill?)

• **Leverage** - Will the knowledge and skill prove to be valuable in learning essential content in other academic areas?

• **Readiness** - Are the knowledge and skills needed in order for the student to be successful and achieve not only at this grade level, but in subsequent grades?

The CDT will utilize the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework to identify the enduring understandings and essential questions related to each Power Standard and develop summative assessments that will verify student learning. Once the desired results (Power Standards) and acceptable evidence of student learning (summative assessments) have been determined, the final step in the curriculum development process will be to create learning experiences (instruction) which will guide student learning in these areas.

**II. Understanding by Design (UbD)**

Understanding by Design (UbD) is a framework for improving student achievement. Emphasizing the teacher’s critical role as a designer of student learning, UbD works within the standards-driven curriculum to help teachers clarify learning goals, devise revealing assessments of student understanding and transfer, and craft effective and engaging learning activities. In this model, teachers do not “teach” an understanding, nor do they hope that students will somehow “discover” the understanding. Rather, teachers “facilitate” the understanding by their design. We organize work and experiences, framed by essential questions, so that students will likely come to the inference themselves. Examples of broad essential questions which require students to apply the understanding and skills learned are:
• Why did 9/11 happen, historically speaking?
• Who sees and who is blind? (For reading Oedipus Rex, The Giver, “The Lottery,” “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” etc.)
• What is a child’s right? What is a parent’s right? (Antigone, Romeo & Juliet, King Lear, etc.)
• What should we do in the face of injustice? Why is it so hard to do it, and how can we find the courage? (To Kill a Mockingbird, “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” “essay on Civil Disobedience, etc.)
• When can math help us determine if something is fair or not?

In “Understanding by Design”, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) lay out a conceptual framework for instructional design. Three key understandings of UbD are:

• The primary goal of education is the development and deepening of student understanding to enable transfer of knowledge and skills to relevant situations.
• Content needs to be “unpacked” to identify the big ideas and essential questions.
• Merely “telling” cannot transmit understanding. Rather, understanding is revealed when students apply (transfer) knowledge and skills to real-life situations, thus learning by doing.

The Backward Design approach utilizes a question format in the planning process. In order to develop an effective curriculum, educators design key questions linked to enduring understandings that are intended to strengthen student learning experiences, build retention, and provide rich experiences that create enduring understanding and a transfer or application. As educators, we want our students to learn and to maintain their learning. The UbD framework ensures this by developing curriculum that not only meets students’ needs but also is an essential part of the learning process. Generally, students learn best by doing; educators accomplish this by designing relevant, meaningful classroom experiences that allow students to demonstrate understanding and the opportunity for transfer of their understanding. Two most important facets of UbD are:

1. The “backwards design” instructional design model

2. Enduring Understandings and Transfer Application

**Backwards Design.** The Backward Design consists of three stages:

**Stage 1: Identify Desired Results:** In other instructional design models, this is known as defining goals and objectives. In stage one, the essential questions are determined to guide stages two and three. During stage one, the essential questions need to focus on enduring value beyond the classroom, require unfolding of abstract or often misunderstood ideas, and offer potential for engaging students. The essential questions will lead to the “enduring understandings.” Wiggins and McTighe suggest that the enduring understandings are not just “material worth covering,” but are understandings that will lead students to deepen their learning about content in a manner that will endure over the long term.

**Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence:** The second stage in the design process is to define what forms of assessment will demonstrate that the students have acquired the knowledge, understanding, and skills to answer the essential questions. In this stage, Wiggins suggests three types of assessment: a performance task, criteria referenced, and self-assessment.
Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction: The third stage in the design process is to determine what sequence of teaching and learning experiences will allow students to develop and demonstrate the necessary enduring understanding.

Enduring Understandings and Transfer Application –UbD also features the Six Facets of Understanding. They are: explain, interpret, apply, perspective, empathize, and self-knowledge. Once a student grasps these facets of understanding, they can then, in turn, transfer that knowledge from one lesson to the next. Following this model of understanding enables the students to make meaningful and lasting connections.

Educators determine what is worth understanding from content standards. The following four criteria, or filters, are used in selecting big ideas and core processes to teach for understanding:

- To what extent does the content standards and topic’s enduring and transferable big ideas have value beyond the classroom?
- To what extent are the content standards and topic’s big ideas and core processes at the heart of the discipline?
- To what extent are the content standards and topic’s abstract, counterintuitive, often misunderstood, or easily misunderstood ideas requiring uncoverage?
- To what extent are the content standards, topics and big ideas embedded in facts, skills, and activities (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005)?

III. Professional Learning Communities (PLC):

The essence of a Professional Learning Community is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student. Educators within this learning community embrace high levels of learning for all students. In order to achieve this purpose, the members of a PLC create and are guided by a clear and compelling vision of what the organization must become in order to help all students learn. Staff work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student’s learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes. PLCs are dedicated to ensure that all students learn essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Three questions that sum up the work of the PLC are:

1. What do we want students to know and do? (Outcomes)
2. How do we know if they have achieved what we want them to know and do (assessment)?
3. What do we do if they do not achieve what we want them to know and do (re-teaching), and what do we do for students who need to move beyond (enrichment)?
Components Necessary to Build Successful PLCs

- Collaborative culture with a focus on learning for all
- Collective inquiry into best practice and current reality
- Action orientation: Learning by Doing
- A commitment to continuous improvement
- Results orientation

Collaborative Culture With a Focus on Learning for All: A PLC is composed of collaborative teams whose members work interdependently to achieve common goals linked to the purpose of learning for all. The team is the engine that drives the PLC effort and the fundamental building block of the organization. It is difficult to overstate the importance of collaborative teams in the improvement process. Collaboration is a means to an end, not the end itself. In many schools, staff members are willing to collaborate on a variety of topics as long as the focus of the conversation stops at their classroom door. In a PLC, collaboration represents a systematic process in which teachers work together interdependently in order to impact their classroom practice in ways that will lead to better results for their students, for their team, and for their school. Therefore, their collaboration centers around certain critical questions:

1. What knowledge, skills, and disposition must each student acquire as a result of this course, grade level, and/or unit of instruction?
2. What evidence will we gather to monitor student learning on a timely basis?
3. How will we provide students with additional time and support in a timely, directive, and systematic way when they experience difficulty in their learning?
4. How will we enrich the learning of students who are already proficient?
5. How can we use S.M.A.R.T. goals and evidence of student learning to inform and improve our practice?

Collective Inquiry Into Best Practice and Current Reality: The staff will engage in collective inquiry into both best practices in teaching and best practices in learning. They also inquire about their current reality—including their present practices and the levels of achievement of their students. Through collaborative discussion, teachers attempt to arrive at consensus on vital questions by building shared knowledge rather than pooling opinions. Teachers develop an acute sense of curiosity and openness to new possibilities. Collective inquiry enables team members to develop new skills and capabilities that in turn lead to new experiences and awareness. Gradually, this heightened awareness transforms into fundamental shifts in attitudes, beliefs and habits, which over time, transform the culture of the school.

Working together to build shared knowledge on the best way to achieve goals and meet the needs of clients is exactly what professionals in any field are expected to do, whether it is curing the patient, winning the lawsuit, or helping all students learn. Members of a professional learning community are expected to work and learn together.
**Action Orientation: Learning by Doing:** Teachers participating in PLCs become action oriented; they move quickly to turn aspirations into actions and visions into reality. They understand that the most powerful learning always occurs in a context of taking action, and they value engagement and experience as the most effective teachers. In fact, the very reason that teachers work together in teams and engage in collective inquiry is to serve as catalysts for action.

Members of PLCs recognize that learning by doing develops a deeper and more profound knowledge and greater commitment than learning by reading, listening, planning or thinking. Traditional schools have developed a variety of strategies to resist taking meaningful actions, preferring the comfort of the familiar. Professional learning communities recognize that until members of the organization “act” differently, there is no reason to anticipate different results. They avoid paralysis by analysis and overcome inertia with action.

**A Commitment to Continuous Improvement:** Inherent to a PLC are a persistent anxiety with the status quo and a constant search for a better way to achieve goals that accomplish the purpose of the organization. Systematic processes engage each member of the organization in an ongoing cycle of:

- Gathering evidence of current levels of student learning
- Developing strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implementing those strategies and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Applying new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

The goal is not simply to learn a new strategy, but instead to create conditions for perpetual learning—an environment in which innovation and experimentation are viewed not as tasks to be accomplished or projects to be completed but as ways of conducting day-to-day business—forever.

**Results Orientation.** Finally, teachers working in a PLC realize that all of their efforts in these areas—a focus on learning, collaborative teams, collective inquiry, action orientation, and continuous improvement—must be assessed on the basis of results rather than intentions. Unless initiatives are subjected to ongoing assessment on the basis of tangible results, they do not represent purposeful improvement. As Peter Senge and colleagues conclude, “The rationale for any strategy for building a learning organization revolves around the premise that such organizations will produce dramatically improved results.”

This focus on results leads each team to develop and pursue measurable improvement goals that are aligned to school and district goals for learning. This goal-oriented focus will drive teams to create a series of common formative assessments that are administered to students multiple times throughout the year to gather ongoing evidence of student learning. Teams of teachers will review the results from these assessments in an effort to identify and address program concerns (areas of learning where many students are experiencing difficulty). Assessment results will also assist teachers to discover strengths and weaknesses in their individual teaching in order to learn from one another. Most importantly, the assessments are used to identify students who need additional time and support for learning. Frequent common formative assessments represent one of the most powerful tools in teaching and learning (DuFour, 2004).
PLANNING APPROACH:

Outcome

Provide a 21st Century Education for All Oak Lawn-Hometwon D123 Students

Understanding by Design (UbD) training. Includes UbD theory development and application trainings.

Facilitated by the Curriculum Development Team (CDT)

Create authentic and purposeful assessments that measure to what extent students meet the identified outcomes.

Create learning plans that include built in differentiation designed to meet the needs of all D123 students.

Utilize staff development time to provide ongoing professional training and support.

Unpacking the CCSS. Compare and contrast with the existing curriculum.

Using the CCSS, identifying the critical skills and knowledge all students should know and be able to apply at each grade level.

Identify evidence necessary to demonstrate understandings and application/transfer.

Develop purposeful, rich, relevant units and lessons that support learning for understanding and application.

Utilize GLM structures for continuous planning and design of working curriculum.

Ongoing staff development, continuous improvement, continuous planning and refinement.
21ST CENTURY LEARNING

How should education be structured to meet the needs of students in this 21st century world? What is the role of stakeholders in the new millennium?

Schools in the 21st century must be structured to engage students in project-based curriculum for life with a goal of engaging students in applying skills and knowledge to answer real-world problems, respond to local and global issues, and formulate questions that challenge assumptions.

Schools in the 21st century should transform from “buildings” to “nerve centers”, with the goal of connecting teachers, students and the community to the wealth of knowledge that exists throughout the world. This is a dramatic departure from the factory-model education of the past. It is abandonment, finally, of textbook-driven, teacher-centered, paper and pencil schooling. It means a new way of understanding the concept of applying knowledge and skills to real-world situations. This shift requires a new way of designing and delivering the curriculum and instruction (McLeod, 2010).

STAKEHOLDER ROLES IN PROCESS

**Board of Education:** The primary role of the board is to provide the necessary support to monitor the implementation of the instructional strategies outlined in the current strategic plan that focus on 21st century education and learning. The board may also create necessary policy as well as provide the support and resources necessary to execute the planning.

- Partnering with the district leadership to ensure that D123 students demonstrate skills and knowledge for success in the 21st-century
- Reviewing and affirming process and materials necessary to support the implementation of the CCSS
- Partnering with the district leadership in supporting the transition to 21st-century teaching and learning and creating a 21st-century learning environment.

**District Office:** The primary role of the district office staff is to support the goal of improved student performance. This will be achieved by focusing efforts on principal development and support in a manner that allows them to spend more time in the classroom supporting staff. Board role includes:

- Supporting the notion of improving student achievement
- Providing leadership and vision necessary to adopt and implement the CCSS
- Working with staff to develop Power Standards
- Modeling tenets ofUbD and PLC
- Supporting the development of principal leadership
• Planning and providing relevant training for all staff
• Maintaining school district (Systems) focus
• Facilitating the adoption and implementation of CCSS
• Supporting teachers and administrators in CCSS adoption and implementation process

**Principal Role.** The primary role of the building principal will be to serve as instructional leader. This includes developing staff to become the best teachers possible as we engage in conversations that will lead to the development of a core educational philosophy central to our future work. The philosophy, in particular, will focus on all staff members learning to apply the principles of *teaching for learning/understanding/transfer of knowledge* (Wiggins, UbD), and developing instructional practices that support this notion. As administration engages staff in dialogue relative to teaching and learning, it is imperative the conversations reinforce the importance of teaching in a manner that meets the needs of 21st century learners. Principal role includes:

• Providing instructional leadership focusing on best practice instruction...teaching for learning
• Providing consistent formative feedback to teachers in the area of instructional pedagogy
• Overseeing the implementation of the CCSS
• Modeling effective collaboration
• Supporting improving student achievement
• Providing vision for teaching for learning
• Providing data analysis/application
• On-going staff training and feedback in best practice instruction
• Partnering with staff to develop mile deep, inch wide curriculum and instruction techniques vs. the inch deep, mile wide “content coverage“ approach to planning and instruction
• Facilitating the transition from coverage to uncovering
• Serving as a Power Standards implementation partner
• Providing fidelity checks/accountability
• Modeling continuous improvement/professional growth

**Teacher Role-** From primary role as a dispenser of information to orchestrator of learning and helping students turn information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom.

The 21st century will require knowledge generation, not just information delivery, and schools will need to create a “culture of inquiry.” Teachers must model lifelong learning. Teachers must understand that they must transition from teaching students to learning with students and even to learning from students. Transforming our professional practices to include continual learning is a powerful teaching strategy that enables educators to maintain relevance by becoming excellent role models, learning guides, process instructors, and futurists. Educators in the new millennium must see themselves as members of a learning organization that develops, adapts, and transforms itself in response to the needs and aspirations of the people it connects with and instructs. Learning makes the organization stronger and keeps it relevant. One can’t be static in such an organization. For many teachers, this will
mean realizing there is a big difference between teaching for 15 years and teaching one year 15 times (McTighe, 2010). Teacher role includes:

- Developing a clear philosophical approach to education
- Applying the UbD and PLC frameworks to guide work
- Adopting and implementing CCSS
- Partnering in developing Power Standards from the CCSS
- Partnering in developing a standards-based curriculum
- Partnering in developing strategic, differentiated instruction connected to Power Standards
- Maintaining student interest by helping them see how what they are learning prepares them for life in the real world.
- Instilling student curiosity, which is fundamental to lifelong learning.
- Being flexible in how we teach.
- Creating a 21st-century learning environment that is exciting for student learners.
- Utilizing collaboration time to focus on teaching and learning
- Utilizing balanced instruction with increased presence of performance-based assessment and inquiry-based instruction
- Understanding the difference between teaching for learning versus teaching for content
- Developing an understanding of the characteristics of 21st century learning and instruction
- Developing common formative and summative assessment that inform instruction
- Embracing the notion of continuous improvement

**Parent Role.** The primary role of parents is to value education and establish practices at home that encourage and support educational success.

- Supporting all facets of student learning
- Engaging students in daily conversations about school
- Asking students what they learned at school each day
- Encouraging and reinforcing students to do their best
- Creating a supportive home environment
- Supporting school work efforts
- Encouraging extracurricular involvement
- Providing a sense of belonging and building self-esteem
- Supporting student interests
- Providing opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving

**Student Role:** In the past, a learner was a young person who went to school, spent a specified amount of time in certain courses, received passing grades and graduated. Today we must see learners in a new context and educate them in a manner that best serves their learning style and prepares them for the 21st century.

- Being curious
- Being creative
- Being active
- Taking responsibility for learning
- Partnering in learning with the school and parents
• Seeking to understand, asking questions when understanding is not clear
• Getting involved in all facets of learning and activities
• Applying learning to real-world situations

PLANNING RESOURCES

Curriculum Development Team (CDT)
Grade Level Meetings (GLM)
Literacy Support Team (LST)
Team Meetings (TM)
District Inservice meetings
Monthly Building meetings
Summer Planning Teams (Teaching staff and administration)

CURRICULUM PLANNING GOALS

The over-arching goal is to adopt and implement the CCSS. As a result of the adoption and implementation, District 123 staff and administration will develop a standards-based curriculum that features assessment and lesson activities that identify and integrate student understandings and applications that demonstrate student mastery of standards. Further, the curriculum design will have fidelity K-8 and include purposeful differentiated instruction designed to meet the needs of all District 123 students. The following five outcomes will reinforce the over-arching goal:

1. Provide a 21st century education for all students
2. Adopt and implement the CCSS
3. Create authentic assessment.
   a. Measures student understanding and application of identified skills and outcomes
   b. Created from identified understandings
   c. Include transfer application
4. Create authentic learning activities
   a. Relevant to 21st century learners
   b. Focus on student-centric learning strategies
   c. Include understanding and application planning
   d. Feature a rich, differentiated approach that highlights inquiry and problem based strategies
5. Achieve the district strategic plan goal to create a 21st century learning environment and experience for all students

ADOPTION & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TIME LINE

Time Line Breakout: Fall 2010-2013

Fall 2010-January 2011 - Meet with administration to discuss the CCSS adoption and implementation plan and clarify the principal role as the “instructional leader” during the process.

Leadership Planning
   • Overseeing the adoption and implementation of the CCSS
   • Developing a clear understanding of the tenants of the PLC i.e., collaboration and continuous improvement
   • Developing a clear understanding of the tenants of UbD i.e., backward design, teaching for understanding and application
   • Understanding role in curriculum development and implementation process
   • Developing a clear understanding of the best practice instructional approaches, specifically in the area of teaching for learning and inquiry-based models
   • Spending time in classrooms each day supporting teachers in their instructional development via formative feedback
   • Modeling use of collaboration time to focus on teaching and learning topics
   • Facilitating faculty discussions related to big picture teaching and learning topics i.e., lesson planning, assessment design, grading and homework procedures, instructional best-practice, differentiation, non-negotiables, RtI
   • Communicating with staff by providing updates relative to progress of the various processes
   • Facilitating horizontal and vertical planning as necessary
   • Providing accountability for adoption and implementation of the CCSS

January/February:

   • Superintendent meets with faculty at each school to discuss and explain the plan and provide opportunity for staff feedback
   • Explain planning ideas for CCSS adoption and implementation rationale
   • Discuss fluidity of plan
   • Discussion of philosophical approach or “vision of learning” central to UbD and PLC frameworks
   • Explain each stakeholder’s role in the process
   • Review/introduce Inquiry-Based Learning model
   • Articulate plan with feeder high school districts
February-March:

- Administrative training in UbD
- Administrative review of PLC training elements
- Vision of Learning: Principals use one faculty meeting per month in order to discuss open-ended questions relative to what it means to teach for learning/transfer. What does it look like in the classroom? How do we change what we do to ensure that each instructional plan includes this element?

April /May

- Begin UbD and PLC framework experimentation
- UbD tools and training for administration follow-up
- UbD tools and training for teaching staff follow-up
- Power Standards introduction and training
- Begin initial work with staff to develop Power Standards in preparation for summer work
- Share results of the spring work with all staff for feedback in preparation for summer work
- Vision of Learning: Principals use one faculty meeting per month in order to discuss open-ended questions relative to what it means to teach for learning/transfer

Summer 2011

Administration, coordinators, staff working together to create the skeleton of the curriculum design work, enduring understandings (basis for assessment and instruction) for the 2011-12 school year – Roles to be more defined at a later date.

Curriculum Development

- Using the Larry Ainsworth’s model and elements of Douglas Reeves’ work, create Power Standards
- Using the UbD framework, identify enduring understandings
- From the enduring understandings, develop summative assessments
- Using the UbD approach, create learning experiences based on assessment development

Evaluation: Assess plan and adjust as necessary.

August 2011

- Intensive training for staff in the area of UbD
- Share the results of the spring and summer planning
Fall 2011

• Implementation of the Common Core
• Power Standards refinement
• Assessment development and refinement (summative and formative)
• Curriculum development in identified gaps
• 21st Century Learning Standards gap analysis
• Articulation with feeder high school districts

Winter/2011-12

• Identify necessary training
• On-going teacher development in UbD and PLC
• On-going curriculum, assessment and learning activity development
• Experimentation/Action Research/Continuous Improvement

Evaluation: Assess plan and adjust as necessary.

Summer/Fall 2012

• Power Standards refinement
• Assessment refinement (summative and formative)
• Curriculum revisions and evolution to include increased resources (in-depth)
• 21st Century Learning standards refinement
• Articulation with feeder HS districts

Evaluation: Assess plan and adjust as necessary.

ESSENTIAL AND OVERARCHING QUESTIONS FOCUSING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Vision Of Learning

Overarching Question: What is an appropriate “vision of learning” for 21st century education?

• Reflection: What century are we teaching to/in?
• What does a 21st century classroom look like?
• What does 21st century teaching and learning look like?
• Are you a 21st century teacher? Why is it important to be a 21st century teacher?
• What evidence is necessary to demonstrate 21st century teaching and learning is occurring?
• What are the characteristics of a 21st century teacher?
• Are we teaching in a manner that is relevant to the way our students learn?
• What can administration do to support you in becoming a 21st century teacher?
Standards-Based Curriculum

**Essential Question:** What role do standards play in the teaching and learning process?

**Overarching Question:** Why is it important to create a standards-based curriculum...

**Sub Questions:**
- What is a standards-based curriculum, and is the current curriculum standards-based?
- How do standards limit or expand what we are attempting to achieve instructionally?
- What is the difference between standards and Power Standards?
- What does it mean to have “fidelity” in curriculum?
- Is it important for each student grade level to have a “guaranteed” curriculum? Why or why not? What about across the district? Should each 4th grade student have a guaranteed experience regardless of which school (s)he attends?
- How are standards embedded in effective collaboration? Examples

**Assessment** - The primary aim of assessment is to inform instruction and as a result, improve student performance, not merely audit it via grades on simplistic tests. Educators must assess what we value and value what we assess in the contexts of a standards-based curriculum. Assessment moves from regurgitation of memorized facts and disconnected processes to demonstration of understanding through application in a variety of contexts. Real-world audiences are an important part of the assessment process, as is self-assessment.

**Overarching Question:** What is the purpose of student assessment?

**Sub Questions:**
- How do we create assessments? What is the starting point for design?
- What factors do you include in your assessments, who is involved in the planning?
- What is the difference between formative and summative assessment?
- What evidence is necessary to show student mastery of a standard?
- How does this impact assessment design?
- How is assessment presently created?
- When should assessment be developed?
- How often should we assess students? (Discuss formative and summative)
- What evidence is needed to judge the effectiveness of an assessment?
- What are characteristics of good assessment? (Include transfer of understandings)
- What impact do standards have on assessment development?
Instruction
Overarching Question: What is the purpose of instruction?

Sub Questions:
- Do we ask ourselves “what is the purpose of this lesson/unit” when planning?
- How do we use assessments to backward-plan learning activities/instruction?
- How do students learn best? Is this reflected in planning?
- What is good instruction, and what evidence is necessary to know instruction is effective?
- What is balanced instruction?
- What is the significance of learning by doing? Discuss uses of inquiry-based instruction and student interest. Move from compliance to independence (gradual release of responsibility).
- How do we assess the effectiveness of daily lessons (formative feedback)?
- How do we use the evidence to inform future instruction?
- How do we plan for richness in instruction and experience?
- How do you measure the extent to which each student has achieved the goal(s) of each lesson?
- What does it mean to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students?

Grading
Overarching Question: What is the purpose of grading?

Sub Questions:
- What is standards-based grading?
- If a student earns an “A” on every end of the unit assessment (summative assessment) and does not turn in any homework assignments (formative assessment), what grade does (s)he receive?
- What is grade inflation? Examples?
- Should there be fidelity in grading? Is an “A” in one classroom the same as an “A” in another?
- What impact does “effort” have on a final grade? (homework, extra credit)
- Is effort found anywhere in the ILLS, CCSS or NAEP standards?
- What is the mathematical impact to a child’s grade if (s)he receives a zero?

Homework
Overarching Question: What is the purpose of homework?

Sub Questions:
- Why do we assign homework?
- Statistically speaking, if there is no connection of homework to student achievement, why is it necessary to assign homework?
- What is an appropriate approach to assigning homework?
- How is homework connected to the daily lesson?
- Should every student receive the same homework?
- Can effort be included in a homework grade?
- Should homework be part of a final grade? If yes, what % of the final grade? Why?
- Can we provide homework in a different manner that is more effective? How?
The bulk of the work outlined in this plan will be completed and supported by:

- Collaboration Time
- District Inservice Meetings
- Monthly Building Meetings
- Team Meetings (OLHMS)
- Grade Level Meetings
- Literacy Support Teams
- Curriculum Coordinators
- Curriculum Development Team (CDT)
- Summer Planning Teams (Teaching Staff and Administration)

**PLAN EVALUATION**

This curriculum plan is intended to be a fluid, living document capable of change whenever necessary. Measurement of this plan’s success will be collected from benchmarks identified by the District 123 Board of Education and administrative team. Communications will occur at regular intervals providing updates relative to the planning process and impact on students and parents. These data will be reviewed and utilized to make adjustments to the plan throughout the implementation time line. The ultimate measure of success of the implementation of this plan will be the demonstration by students of the ability to be successful learners and thinkers, able to think critically and challenge assumptions, solve real-life problems, and apply skills learned to relevant real-world situations.

**REFERENCES**


