



Noblesville Schools

**Procedures for
Curriculum Review and Development**

Background and Purpose

Structure and Timeline

Program Review

Curriculum Revision and Creation/Selection of Curricular Materials

Implementation, Monitoring, and Adjustment of Curriculum

Fall 2020



NOBLESVILLE SCHOOLS

ENGAGE | INSPIRE | EMPOWER

Vision

We are

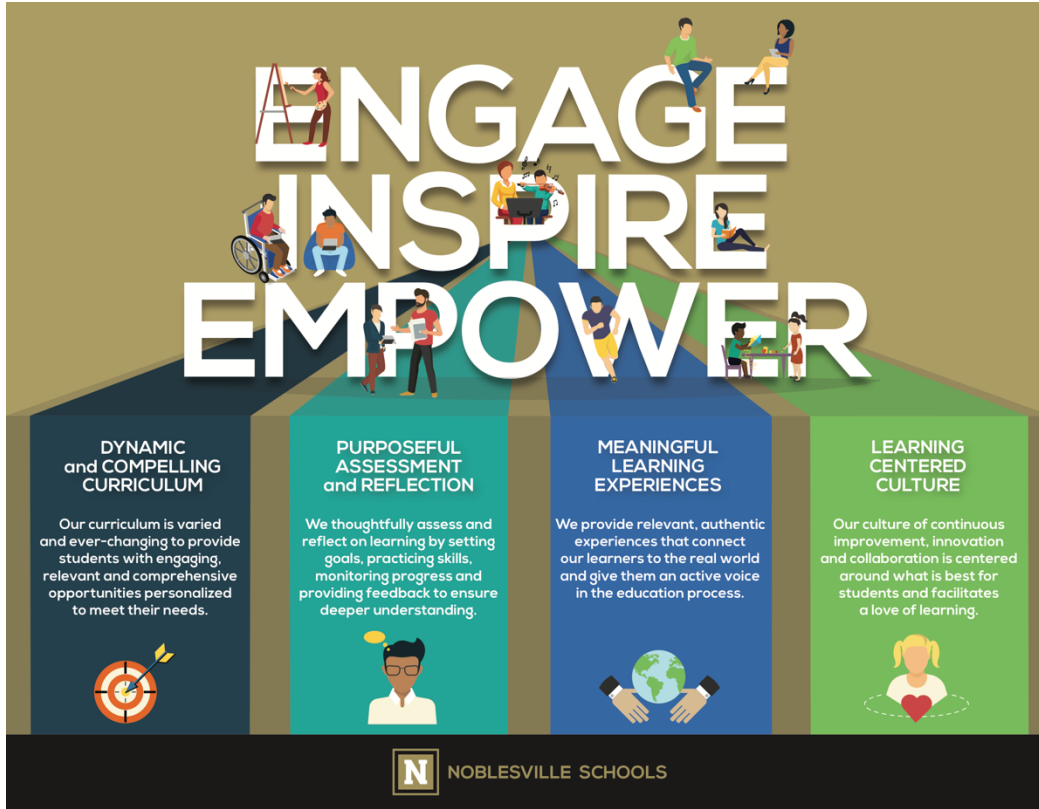
- Engaged in intellectual pursuits
- Inspired to challenge the present
- Empowered to adapt, innovate, and succeed today and tomorrow

Mission

Noblesville Schools creates an inclusive, learner-centered culture that develops future-ready skills through relevant experiences supported by strong relationships that celebrate diversity and promote equity among students, staff, parents, and the community.

Part I: Background and Purpose

In order to fulfill our district vision and mission, Noblesville Schools created an instructional model during the 2016-17 school year to provide additional depth to the vision and mission, as well as guidance for our efforts to realize them. This model features four essential areas, depicted in the image below.



The model was further elaborated in a description and summary table:

The Noblesville Instructional Model consists of four interconnected aspects of teaching and learning that exemplify the unifying design principles of instruction that are reflected within every classroom in the district.

	Description	Summary
Dynamic and Compelling Curriculum	The foundation of our Dynamic and Compelling Curriculum uses Wiggins and McTighe’s approach: Understanding by Design. This approach emphasizes backwards planning, thinking with the end goal in mind. We constantly ask, “What will the learner need to understand, know, and be able to do at the end of each unit?” This work incorporates the Indiana Academic Standards along with the appropriate skills, knowledge, assessments, and learning activities that are relevant, appropriate, and variable according to student need and interest.	Important to remember: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning with the end in mind ● Relevance in instructional design ● Ongoing revisions to meet learners’ needs ● Understanding by Design ● Stage 1: Skills, Knowledge, Acquisition, Meaning-Making ● Stage 2: Assessment, Performance Task ● Stage 3: Instruction ● Stage 4: Reflection and Revision
Purposeful Assessment and Reflection	Purposeful assessment should be valid, reliable, and connected to meaningful learning goals. It includes a balance of formative and summative assessments that can be conducted prior to instruction to guide lesson development, during instruction to guide next steps, and/or after instruction to determine student mastery and guide supplemental support as well as extension opportunities. Assessments should address all Stage 1 goals (A, M, T). They should deepen both the teacher’s and the student’s understanding of the learner and the learner’s progress toward course and unit goals. Through reflection, learners become more aware of metacognitive practices and take	Important to remember: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individualization ● Evidence of student learning ● Valid, reliable data connected to learning targets ● Adjusts and enhances teaching and learning ● Timely feedback ● A = Acquisition ● M = Meaning

	ownership of learning goals. Both student and teacher are involved in a process of collecting, monitoring, reflecting, and responding to data in a manner that increases individual student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T = Transfer
Meaningful Learning Experiences	Meaningful learning experiences first require a curriculum that is grounded in substantive standards and includes elements to promote relevance and student engagement, such as transfer goals, essential questions, enduring understandings, and performance tasks. This curriculum is then taught through intentionally designed, appropriate pedagogical approaches that align and support the established learning targets. For example, higher-order cognitive growth targets embedded in the learning target (metacognition, creation, etc.) may require an inquiry-based pedagogy, while lower-order cognitive growth targets embedded in the learning target (retrieval, comprehension, etc.) may require a more direct instructional approach. In any case, it is important that the teacher selects the pedagogy that best supports mastery of the desired learning target. Meaningful learning experiences happen only when these choices occur, and both the curriculum design and pedagogical approach are aligned and mutually reinforcing.	<p>Important to remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is the agent of learning • Teacher is the facilitator • Meaningful knowledge is constructed by the learner • Experience mediates learning (application of experiential learning) • Meaningful knowledge is applied in the real world. • Learning requires retention over time.
Learning Centered Culture	A learning centered culture is an environment where instruction is flexible and responsive to the learners. It recognizes that students learn in different ways and at different times. It frames the learner holistically to encompass social-emotional, cognitive, and behavioral needs. It encourages meaningful personalized experiences, including all stakeholders. Collaborative, innovative, and cooperative practices are highlighted in an environment where all learners have a voice, and learning is a shared responsibility. It encourages and supports learners in taking risks in their learning. A love of learning is facilitated throughout the day.	<p>Important to remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making every opportunity a learning opportunity • Student-centered learning environment

To create and maintain a dynamic and compelling curriculum--the first element of the instructional model--Noblesville Schools personnel follow a systematic process of review, research, reflection, and revision of existing curricula, instructional strategies, and curricular materials in the context of student achievement. This process is described in the pages that follow.

Part II: Structure and Timeline

The Directors of Learning initiate, organize, facilitate, and evaluate the curriculum review and development process. Although the Indiana Department of Education no longer requires a six-year textbook adoption cycle for all curricular areas, some functions, such as the revision of Indiana Academic Standards and review of instructional programs continue roughly on a six-year cycle. Also, local operations benefit from maintaining a six-year cycle, as it allocates time, attention, and financial resources to avoid unreasonable demands.

Various forces cause adjustments in the planned cycle. Examples include decisions by federal and state education agencies, response to needs revealed by student performance data, actions taken by publishers and vendors of instructional materials, requirements of entities such as the College Board and dual credit partners, and time-sensitive opportunities that should not be missed. For instance, development of the math curriculum and instructional materials in the district has been out of sequence since 2011 because of a program review that

was conducted at that time, resulting implementation of a different K – 5 math instructional approach, later adjustments in state tests, and changes in approved high school course offerings.

The table below depicts the activities and timeline for subject areas. Note that the state’s former “miscellaneous” category includes Art, Business and Information Technology, Family and Consumer Sciences, Performing Arts, Engineering and Technology Education, and Wellness.

Program Review
Curriculum Revision (fall), Creation/Selection of Curricular Materials (spring)
Implementation, Monitoring, and Adjustment of Revised Curriculum and Materials

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Social Studies							
Math							
Science							
English Language Arts							
World Lang							
Miscellaneous							

Part III: Program Review

The Program Review Committee is made up of representatives from K – 12 stakeholder groups such as educators, parents, community members, and professionals in the field as appropriate. School representatives may include teachers, instructional coaches, media specialists, lead teachers, other educators, and administrators. The work of the committee culminates in a report to the Board of School Trustees.

Curriculum development begins with an evaluation of existing learning and teaching in the subject area under consideration. Components of the Program Review include several actions to gather information about student performance, best practices, and the current situation in the district. These actions may include

- Consultation of current professional literature in the discipline
- Review of Indiana Academic Standards
- Analysis of all available measures of student achievement
- Solicitation of stakeholder (students, parents, teachers, other) opinions and advice related to the current situation and desires for the future
- Observations of K – 12 learning and teaching, including but not limited to elements such as articulation of content and skills, instructional strategies, and instructional resources (space, time, materials)

Based on the evidence obtained through these actions, both strengths and areas for improvement are identified in the final report as Findings (or Conclusions) and Recommendations.

Directors of Learning may select and adapt methods of collecting evidence according to district needs and priorities.

Part IV: Curriculum Revision and Creation/Selection of Instructional Materials and Resources

Curriculum Revision

The Indiana Academic Standards provide the basis for the curriculum of Noblesville Schools. These standards establish not only the content and skills for each subject, grade, or course, but also the expectations for increasingly higher levels of understanding, performance, and critical and abstract thinking.

Most fields of study benefit from a statement of program foundations. These foundations draw upon the findings and recommendations of the Program Review Report and guide decisions about K – 12 curriculum and instruction in each subject area. Foundations include

- The Philosophy of Education for the subject: a one- or two-sentence statement of the purpose and outcomes of the educational program
- Mission-related Program Goals: 5 – 7 desired outcomes, stated in terms of what learners will know and be able to do in the subject, or habits of mind that they will exhibit
- K – 12 Program Beliefs: 5 – 7 statements describing what learning in the subject looks like or consists of

An effective K – 12 instructional program is also advanced by an overview of the content and skills that are introduced, practiced, mastered and extended in different grade levels or grade bands (e.g. K – 2, 3 – 5, 6 – 8, 9 – 12). This overview presents, in a clear and concise fashion, the Big Ideas (*Students* will learn about . . .), Enduring Understandings (*Students* will understand that . . .), and Essential Questions (*Students* will keep considering . . .) that are featured at different levels. The learning spiral is thus easily recognizable so that teachers and other curriculum developers can make informed decisions about specific units, learning plans, and curricular materials. Note that in place of *Students* in the stems in parentheses above, references to students as practitioners in the field reinforce their identification of themselves as *Scientists, Readers, Mathematicians, Writers, Artists, Musicians, etc.*

The model for curriculum in Noblesville Schools is *Understanding by Design*, by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. This model is based on backward design and a three-stage approach to developing unit plans. Components of the stages in each unit plan are briefly described as

Stage 1: Transfer Goals; Established Goals; Enduring Understandings; Essential Questions; Acquisition of Knowledge, Skills, and Vocabulary; and Content Standards

Stage 2: Evaluation Criteria; and Checks for Understanding, including Summative Assessments, Performance Tasks, and Other Evidence

Stage 3: Learning Plan, Professional Resources, and Mentor Texts

Membership in work groups to create or revise UbD unit plans varies according to subject, grade level, expertise, and other factors. Building administrators and Directors of Learning work with the Noblesville Teachers Forum to create these groups and facilitate the curriculum development process.

Throughout the creation and revision of program foundations and curricular units, work group members share drafts, obtain feedback, and adjust documents as appropriate. Connections between all components of the district curriculum are emphasized during the process: mission and vision, instructional model, state standards, program foundations, unit plans, selection and development of materials and other resources, and implementation. Although the curriculum development process is described as a sequence of steps, these components are continually consulted as the basis of decisions about different facets of the whole.

Elementary units are typically written by representatives of grade levels and buildings throughout the district. Participants in Program Review Committees are encouraged to continue their involvement because of the special expertise gained through their experiences in the review. Secondary teachers collaborate with others in the same course or subject to write unit plans. Vertical articulation of knowledge, skills, and expectations for rigor is promoted through unit reviews across grade levels.

The basic template for UbD units appears as Appendix A. With administrative permission, work groups may adjust the template according to the needs of their subject, but the stages and the thinking represented in each stage remain consistent from K - 12. Additional questions to guide the creation of the Stage 3 Learning Plan consider topics such as student engagement, differentiation, cognitive demand, integration of technology, and formative assessment. See the Stage 3 Learning Plan in Appendix B.

All instructional foundations (philosophy, beliefs, and goals) and curricular units are provided to educators involved in their implementation, such as classroom teachers, resource teachers, instructional coaches, department chairpersons, learning specialists, EL collaborative teachers, and administrators. Teachers with relevant teaching assignments are expected to implement the agreed-upon curriculum, with allowable adjustments for the needs of special populations. Questions about allowable adjustments may be directed to department chairpersons or building administrators.

Creation and/or Selection of Curricular Materials and Other Resources

Directors of Learning initiate and facilitate the creation and/or selection of instructional materials or resources needed to execute the established curriculum. Materials and resources are evaluated according to characteristics including, but not limited to

- relation to standards, program review, program overview, relevant state (and other) assessments, district policies, unit plans
- non-negotiable components identified through the curriculum review and materials selection processes, comparisons of various materials' or resources' approach to a selected skill or topic, a rubric or checklist developed locally or obtained from a third party such as the IDOE or professional organization, or other tools to identify important elements and guide the assessment of materials and resources
- accessibility to all students
- digital components, compatibility and accessibility, rostering

Membership in groups to select or develop instructional materials may vary according to the subject, grade level, members' expertise, or other factors. Members may represent grades, buildings, PLCs, special populations, technology personnel, or other perspectives as appropriate. Work groups may share samples and drafts to obtain feedback from colleagues who will use them. The Directors of Learning oversee these processes and facilitate the communication of outcomes.

Part V: Implementation, Monitoring, and Adjustment of Revised Curriculum and Instructional Materials

All teachers of a subject, course, or grade level are expected to use the agreed-upon curriculum and instructional materials. Various actions will ensure successful implementation of new or revised courses, units, and resources. These actions include, but are not limited to, examples listed below. The Directors of Learning monitor and facilitate these processes.

Print and digital resources

- ordering, distribution, assignment, rostering

Professional development

- use of materials and resources, including training provided by the publisher or vendor as well as locally developed training
- new or enhanced instructional strategies required or implied by units or resources

Teacher self-assessment

- levels of use
- professional goal setting and action plan

Review of student performance measures

- locally developed and standardized assessments

Observations

- administrators
- department chairs
- instructional coaches, including coaching cycles

- mentors, PLC members

Modifications of curriculum, units, resources

- based on student performance
- derived from stakeholder feedback
- resulting from outside forces such as changes in standards, accountability measures, discontinuation of resources

Stage 1 Desired Results	
ESTABLISHED GOALS [What content standards and program- or mission-related goal(s) will this unit address?]	Transfer <i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i> [What long-term independent accomplishments are desired?]
What habits of mind and cross-disciplinary goal(s)—for example, 21 st century skills or core competencies—will this unit address?]	Meaning ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS <i>Students will keep considering...</i> [What thought-provoking questions will foster inquiry, meaning-making, and transfer?]
	Acquisition <i>Students will know...</i> [What facts and basic concepts should students know and be able to recall?]
	<i>Students will be skilled at...</i> [What discrete skills and processes should students be able to use?]
Stage 2 - Evidence	
Evaluative Criteria [What criteria will be used in each assessment to evaluate attainment of the desired results? Regardless of the format of the assessment, what qualities are most important?]	Assessment Evidence PERFORMANCE TASK(S): <i>Students will show that they really understand by evidence of...</i> [How will students demonstrate their understanding (meaning-making and transfer) through complex performance?] OTHER EVIDENCE: <i>Students will show they have achieved Stage 1 goals by...</i> [What other evidence will you collect to determine whether Stage 1 goals were achieved?]
Stage 3 – Learning Plan	
<i>Summary of Key Learning Events and Instruction</i>	
Pre-assessment [What pre-assessments will you use to check students' prior knowledge, skill levels, and potential misconceptions?]	
Learning Events [Are all three types of goals (acquisition, meaning, and transfer) addressed in the learning plan? Does the learning plan reflect principles of learning and best practices? Are learning events tightly aligned with Stages 1 and 2? Is the plan likely to be engaging and effective for all students?]	
Progress Monitoring [How will you monitor students' progress toward acquisition, meaning-making, and transfer during learning events? What are potential rough spots and student misunderstandings? How will students receive effective feedback?]	

Stage 3: LEARNING PLAN

Code	Learning Events	Guiding Questions: Questions are to guide thinking and planning. Not all questions apply at all times, and written responses are not required.	Checks for Understanding/Formative Assessment
<p>What is the goal for each (or each type of) learning event?</p> <p>Sudent success at transfer, meaning, and acquisition depends upon...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there tight alignment with Stages 1 and 2? <p>Things to consider when planning</p> <p>WHERE IS THE WORK HEADED?</p> <p>HOW WILL YOU HOOK YOUR STUDENTS AND CONTINUE ENGAGEMENT?</p> <p>E-EXPLORE AND EQUIP: HOW WILL YOU LET STUDENTS EXPLORE AND GUIDE THEM THROUGH INSTRUCTION?</p> <p>R-RETHINK AND REVISE: HOW WILL STUDENTS SELF ASSESS, RETHINK?</p> <p>E-EVALUATE UNDERSTANDINGS: REVEAL WHAT HAS BEEN UNDERSTOOD</p> <p>T-TAILOR: HOW WILL YOU DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION?</p> <p>O-ORGANIZE: HOW WILL THE SEQUENCE MAXIMIZE LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT?</p> <p>INQUIRY: WHAT KINDS OF INQUIRY LEADS TO DEEP LEARNING/TRANSFER FOR STUDENTS ALIGNED WITH GOALS?</p>	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What method of instruction will be best (direct instruction, inquiry, demonstration, guided practice, other)? • How do students know what they should learn and why it is important? • How does the unit allow students to connect and communicate in various formats? • What opportunities are provided for students to reflect on their progress and revise their work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - share/publish/impact their community with their learning? - How do the classroom culture and learning plan support creativity and innovation? <p>Differentiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What multiple pathways for learning are provided? • How do student voice and choice shape learning tasks? • How are individual access points and student goals considered in learning tasks? • How are WIDA standards reflected in descriptors for EL proficiency levels? • What provisions are made for enrichment and scaffolding to support the unique needs of all learners? <p>Cognitive Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do learning tasks cause students to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - think abstractly/conceptually? - view issues from multiple perspectives? • What higher-level questions are students asking to drive their own learning? • How are talk and deep thinking included in the unit? <p>Integration of Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are technology tools used to differentiate, personalize, and scaffold for students? • How can technology allow students to demonstrate their learning in ways they cannot do without it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit slips, observations, anecdotal notes, conversations? • How will you monitor students' progress toward acquisition, meaning, and transfer, during lesson events? • What are potential rough spots and student misunderstandings? • How will students get the feedback they need? • How do we provide and structure students' own reflection on growth performance? 	

Resources	
Professional Resources	Mentor Texts
<p>What professional resources will assist in the thinking, teaching and learning of this work?</p> <p>What mentor texts will be used to serve as models of the work being done within the particular discipline?</p>	