



T.O.C.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Michigan Curriculum Framework* is a resource for helping Michigan’s public and private schools design, implement, and assess their core content area curricula. The content standards identified in this document are presented as models for the development of local district curriculum by the Michigan State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education. They represent rigorous expectations for student performance, and describe the knowledge and abilities needed to be successful in today’s society. When content, instruction, and local and state assessments are aligned, they become powerful forces that contribute to the success of student achievement.

The framework presents a content and a process for developing curriculum that enables schools to realize Michigan’s vision for K-12 education:

Michigan’s K-12 education will ensure that all students will develop their potential in order to lead productive and satisfying lives. All students will engage in challenging and purposeful learning that blends their experiences with content knowledge and real-world applications in preparation for their adult roles, which include becoming:

- ◆ *literate individuals*
- ◆ *healthy and fit people*
- ◆ *responsible family members*
- ◆ *productive workers*
- ◆ *involved citizens*
- ◆ *self-directed, lifelong learners*

The intent of this document is to provide useful resources to districts as they strive to implement a program which ensures that all students reap the benefits of a quality education and achieve the adult roles described in Michigan’s vision for K-12 education. The content standards and benchmarks serve as worthy goals for all students as they develop the knowledge and abilities inherent in their adult roles. They represent an essential component in the process of continuous school improvement, which like professional development, should be focused on improving student achievement.

We believe that efforts to set clear, common, state and/or community-based academic standards for students in a given school district or state are necessary to improve student performance. Academic standards clearly define what students should know and be able to do at certain points in their schooling to be considered proficient in specific academic areas. We believe that states and communities can benefit from working together to tap into the nation’s best thinking on standards and assessments.

1996 National Education Summit Policy Statement

“Setting high standards for our children. It’s the sine qua non for any other reforms anyone might want to implement. We can’t judge the efficacy of ideas because we have no yardsticks by which to measure success or failure.”

Louis V. Gerstner
Chairman and CEO, IBM

The framework emphasizes the importance of:

- ◆ using continuous school improvement to align all district initiatives for the purpose of increasing student achievement;
- ◆ building a curriculum based on rigorous content standards and benchmarks;
- ◆ using student achievement data to make decisions about continuous school improvement, curriculum, instruction, and professional development; and,
- ◆ incorporating research-supported teaching and learning standards into daily instructional practice.

BACKGROUND

In 1993, the Michigan Department of Education, in collaboration with representatives from five state universities, was awarded federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop curriculum framework components for English language arts, mathematics, science, and geography. In addition, the Michigan Council for the Social Studies offered, and was supported by the State Board of Education, to develop a curriculum framework component for social studies which would include history, economics, and American government, and would be complementary to the geography framework.

The *Michigan Curriculum Framework* brings together the work of individual content area projects to present a unified view of curriculum, one which addresses the educational needs of the whole learner. The goal of the curriculum framework is to improve student achievement by aligning classroom instruction with core curriculum content standards and national content standards. It is designed to be used as a process for the decision-making that guides continuous school improvement. It describes curriculum, instruction, and assessment and focuses on improving program quality by aligning all the processes that affect a student’s achievement of rigorous content standards.

Framework project co-directors, university representatives, and the Michigan Department of Education content area consultants met regularly with members of their content area professional organizations to design the components of the curriculum framework. Committees of teachers and university personnel worked together to draft the content standards, benchmarks, and performance standards for their specific content areas.

Co-directors met on a monthly basis to coordinate the efforts of the various content area committees in developing K-12 standards and benchmarks for their subject areas. Their purpose was to ensure that the framework represents a consistent view of curriculum across content areas. They wanted to facilitate continuous school improvement by emphasizing commonalities among the content areas with regard to professional development, assessment, and instruction.

The co-directors were guided by a Joint Steering Committee comprised of representatives from the content areas, parents, business leaders, labor leaders, house and senate staff, and educators. Joint Steering Committee members reviewed the framework projects at each phase of their development and made recommendations for improving their quality. Their insight helped the co-directors incorporate the views of all of Michigan's interested parties into the final framework document.

WHAT IS IN THE FRAMEWORK?

The framework includes the resources needed to develop a standards-based curriculum. Standards and benchmarks for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies are included in this edition of the framework. Standards and benchmarks for arts education, career and employability skills, health education, life management education, physical education, technology education, and world languages will be added to the next edition of the framework. The process described in the framework will be expanded to incorporate the additional core content areas when they are completed. The chart on page vi provides a list of the materials that eventually will be included in the framework document.

Tier I

Content Standards and Benchmarks

Tier I begins with a complete list of core curriculum content standards and benchmarks for grades K-12 in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and social science. The standards describe what all students should know and be able to do in each of the subject areas. The benchmarks indicate what students should know and be able to do at various developmental levels (i.e., early elementary school, later elementary school, middle school, and high school).

Planning

The framework includes a planning section. It provides a model for using the standards and benchmarks to create a local district curriculum as part of continuous school improvement. It discusses the importance of involving representatives from all stakeholders in the curriculum development process. In addition, it emphasizes the need for alignment among all of the processes that comprise continuous school improvement and focuses attention on placing student achievement at the center of all decision-making. It emphasizes the need for continuity in a K-12 curriculum. Continuity is developed by clearly defining benchmarks that establish increasingly complex demonstrations of rigorous standards.

Teaching and Learning

The section on teaching and learning describes standards that are the foundation to successful learning in all content areas. The standards include deep knowledge, higher-order thinking, substantive conversation, and connections to the world beyond the classroom. It illustrates the standards through sample

teaching vignettes in each of the content areas. It discusses the importance of incorporating strategies for technology, connecting with the learner, interdisciplinary learning, and introducing career choices and preparation into the curriculum.

Assessment System

The framework contains a section on assessment which describes the need for developing a local assessment system to monitor student growth and program effectiveness. This section of the framework is divided into three parts. The first part provides a rationale for why an assessment system is needed. The second part describes how teachers can develop performance assessments based on the content standards and benchmarks. The third part discusses important issues related to building an assessment system that aligns local assessment practices with state assessment.

Professional Development

The section on professional development lists standards for the context, content, and process of professional development experiences. It includes a process for designing professional development which aligns with school improvement, curriculum content, student learning, and assessment needs. A vignette of one teacher's personal, professional development experiences is provided to illustrate Michigan's Standards for Professional Development.

Executive Summaries and Glossary

The appendices of the framework contain executive summaries of important resources that will aid a district as it develops, implements, and monitors its local curriculum. A glossary of framework terms is also provided.

Tier II

Toolkits

Tier II contains a collection of toolkits designed to help districts with specific tasks such as conducting discrepancy analyses. There are additional toolkits to guide districts in incorporating principles associated with connecting with the learner, technology, curriculum integration, and career preparation. There are toolkits on planning subject area instructional units, designing classroom assessments, and planning a district assessment system. *(Some of the above mentioned toolkits are still under development.)*

Tier III

Resources

Tier III contains content-area specific resources that help clarify the curriculum development process described in the framework. These include resources such as the *Science Education Guidebook*, the *Mathematics Teaching and Learning Sample Activities*, *Guidelines for the Professional Development of Teachers of English Language Arts*, and *Powerful & Authentic Social Studies Standards for Teaching*. It also

contains a guidebook written specifically for parents and the business community explaining the elements of the framework.

HOW TO USE THE FRAMEWORK

District school improvement committees and curriculum development committees will find the framework and its toolkits very useful as they begin the process of creating a standards-based curriculum. Reading and discussing the contents of the framework will help school improvement committee members gain a clearer understanding of the curriculum development process. The toolkits will help subcommittees develop techniques for creating and aligning curriculum, assessment, and instruction. They will also help districts make decisions about the professional development strategies which will most effectively help their students reach targeted achievement goals.

The first step in using the framework is to make sure that all interested parties are familiar with its content. Then an analysis to determine what needs to be done should be completed. Once the district identifies the tasks that need to be completed, a plan for structuring committees and a time-line for completing the tasks should be designed.

The framework is intended for use by all districts. While the writers used the structure of a middle-sized district as a frame of reference, the content and processes it describes are equally important for large and small districts. Although private schools are not bound by the core curriculum requirements of the Michigan School Code, they may find the framework useful as a tool for curriculum development. Large districts, small districts, private schools, and public school academies may choose to modify the process to reflect their organizational structures. The number and size of committees needed to implement the framework will vary from district to district, but the task will remain the same: to align curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development for the purpose of increasing student achievement of rigorous content standards.

Michigan Curriculum Framework

TIER I

This document introduces the framework standards and describes the components and processes needed to develop K-12 curricula.

Introduction

Standards & Benchmarks

Planning

Teaching and Learning

Assessment System

Professional Development

Executive Summaries of Toolkits and Other Resources

Parent and Business Leader Guides (under development)

TIER II

These documents are toolkits designed to help districts achieve alignment while developing curriculum, instruction, and assessment consistent with their standards and benchmarks. (For availability, see <http://cdp.mde.state.mi.us/MCF/new.html>)

Discrepancy Analysis

1. Analysis of Curriculum
2. Analysis of Instruction
3. Analysis of Assessment
4. Analysis of Professional Development
5. Analysis of School Operations

Connecting with the Learner
Technology
Curriculum Integration
Connecting School-To-Work

Local Assessment System

TIER III

These resources are specific to each content area and help clarify and strengthen the curriculum development processes described in the first two tiers. (For availability, see <http://cdp.mde.state.mi.us/MCF/new.html>)

- Michigan Geography Framework Poster
- Analysis of Mathematics Instructional and Assessment Materials
- Mathematics Research Component
- Social Studies Curriculum Planning Guide

- [Science Education Guidebook](#)
- *New Directions* Science Teaching Units
- Portraits of Literacy Instruction in Primary Classrooms
- A Collection of English Language Arts Vignettes
- Readings from the Demonstration Projects
- [Mathematics Teaching and Learning Sample Activities](#)
- Standards Based Geography Units
- Powerful & Authentic Social Studies: Standards for Teaching and Learning

- Mathematics Assessment Framework
- The Model Assessment Items Resource Book (*Science*)
- Michigan Assessment Prototypes for Geography
- Plan for Statewide Assessment of Social Studies
- Social Studies Assessment Guide

- Guidelines for the Professional Development of Teachers of English Language Arts
- Mathematics Professional Development Component
- Powerful and Authentic Social Studies Professional Development Package
- Powerful and Authentic Social Studies Standards for Teaching