Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Practice, Marzano, 2003

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"**The single most important initiative a school or district can engage in to raise student achievement…**"

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A **guaranteed and viable curriculum** (GVC) ensures that **all students have an equal opportunity to learn** (OTL). Each student will have access to an **effective or highly effective teacher**, and access to the same content, knowledge and skills in each section or class.

What is a guaranteed curriculum?

Every student is provided the opportunity to learn a core curriculum which provides them with the probability of success in school.

What is a viable curriculum?

Schools make sure that the necessary time is available and protected so students will be able to learn the guaranteed curriculum.

The Principles Of A Guaranteed And Viable Curriculum

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- Creating a **horizontal sequence** of what needs to be learned across individual grade levels or courses as well as a **vertical sequence** from grade level to grade level or from course to course.

- Providing teachers with a **correlation** to the standards and assessments in an attempt to assure students are as well prepared as possible.

- **Data-driven assessment.**

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

http://www.ccsuvt.org/curriculum-instruction-and-assessment/curriculum/power-standards-and-indicators

A **Guaranteed, Viable Curriculum** consists of **Power Standards and Power Indicators** that fully outline the content, concepts, and skills that are essential within an academic discipline and at each grade level to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve proficiency. The Guaranteed, Viable Curriculum provides clarity and guidance to principals, teachers, students, and parents about the core curriculum and its essential content and skills. Having this document in place, clearly indicating Power (Critical) Standards, Power Indicators, and a common local assessment plan, **means that individual teachers do not have the option not to teach this content and these skills, or to replace them with something else. Viability means the distinctly articulated content and skills can be taught and learned (not rushed and covered) within the timeframes available during the academic year.**

Opportunity to Learn

What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Practice, Marzano, 2003

Opportunity to learn (OTL) has the strongest relationship with student achievement of all school-level factors.

It may seem like common sense, but data shows that success in mastery learning is directly related to "**whether or not students have had an opportunity to study a particular topic or learn how to solve a particular type of problem presented by the test."** (Husen)

Management Essentials

One of the major barriers to the opportunity to learn is time. **Preparing a guaranteed curriculum requires that teachers have adequate time to prepare, instruct and assess, and that students have adequate time to receive, process, and retain new information**. **Viable curriculum means that the power standards, instructional calendar (pacing guide), and daily instruction are all manageable and can be realistically taught *to mastery levels* in the instructional year.**

(*What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Practice,* Marzano, 2003)

Purpose of the
Instructional Calendar / Curriculum Map

- Teachers, students and parents across all grades and subject areas will have a **guide** for what students need to learn in order to be successful.

- P-12 instructional programming planning will create necessary scaffolding for learning, align the focus of critical standards, and reduce **redundancies** in instruction.

- Overlapping critical skills will **prevent gaps** in the necessary sequence of learning across grades levels and subject areas.

Planning for GVC and OTL will require foundational work and follow through measured by Leading (early) and Criterion (later) indicators which will indicate the schools course towards effectiveness in implementation.

Monitoring the indicators will shape future implementation.

Leading Indicators:

(1) The school curriculum and accompanying assessments adhere to state and district standards.

<u>Examples:</u>
• The written curriculum is analyzed to ensure that it correlates with state and district standards
• The written curriculum adequately addresses important 21st century skills
• The curriculum taught in the classrooms is analyzed to ensure that it correlates with the written curriculum
• **Assessments have been analyzed to ensure that they accurately measure the written and taught curriculums**
• School teams regularly analyze the relationship between the written curriculum, taught curriculum, and assessments
• **When asked, teachers can describe the essential content and standards for their subject area(s) or grade level(s)**

Leading Indicators:

(2) The school curriculum is focused enough that it can be adequately addressed in the time available to teachers.

Examples:
- Essential elements of content are identified
- How much time it would take to adequately address the essential elements is examined
- Teams regularly meet to discuss the progression and viability of documents that articulate essential content and timing of delivery
- Essential vocabulary is identified at all levels

Leading Indicators:

(3) All students have the opportunity to learn the critical content of the curriculum.

<u>Examples:</u>

• Tracking systems are in place that examine each student's access to the essential elements of the curriculum

• **Parents are aware of their child's current access to the essential elements of the curriculum**

• All students have access to advanced placement courses

• The extent to which all students have access to necessary courses has been analyzed

• The school ensures teachers have completed appropriate content area training in their subject area courses

• A system of direct vocabulary instruction is available all levels

Leading Indicators:

(4) Clear and measurable goals are established and focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement at the school level.

<u>Examples:</u>

• Goals are established as a percentage of students who will score at a proficient or higher level on state assessments or benchmark assessments

• Goals are established for eliminating differences in achievement for students at different socioeconomic levels

• Goals are established for eliminating differences in achievement for students of differing ethnicities

• School-wide achievement goals are posted so that faculty and staff see them on a regular basis

• School-wide achievement goals are discussed regularly at faculty and staff gatherings

• Faculty and staff can describe the school-wide achievement goals

• Faculty and staff can explain how goals eliminate differences in achievement for students of differing ethnicities

• Improvement goals are assigned to various departments and faculty

• Goals are established for eliminating the achievement gap for all students

• Goals address the most critical and severe deficiencies

• Timelines contain specific benchmarks for each goal, including individual(s) responsible for the goal

Leading Indicators:

(5) Data are analyzed, interpreted, and used to regularly monitor progress toward school achievement goals.

<u>Examples:</u>

• Overall student achievement is regularly analyzed

• Student achievement is examined from the perspective of value-added results

• Results from multiple types of assessments are regularly reported and used (e.g., benchmark, common assessments)

• When asked, faculty and staff can describe the different types of reports available to them

• Reports, graphs, and charts are regularly updated to track growth in student achievement

• School leadership teams regularly analyze school growth data

• Data briefings are conducted at faculty meetings

Leading Indicators:

(6) Appropriate school-level and classroom-level programs and practices are in place to help students meet individual achievement goals when data indicate interventions are needed.

<u>Examples:</u>
- Extended school day and week programs are in place
- Extended school year programs are in place
- After-school programs are in place
- Tutorial programs are in place
- The school schedule is designed so that students can receive academic help while in school
- Individual student completion of **programs designed to enhance their academic achievement is monitored**
- Response to intervention (RtI) measures and programs are in place
- Enrichment programs are in place

Examples of Criterion Indicators:

- Curriculum documents are in place that correlate the written curriculum to state and district standards
- Curriculum documents are in place correlating the written curriculum to the skills important to 21st century learning
- Information is available correlating what is taught in the classrooms (i.e., the taught curriculum) and the written curriculum
- Information is available examining the extent to which assessments accurately measure the written and taught curriculums
- A written list of essential elements is in place
- **A written list of essential vocabulary is in place for all levels**
- A curriculum audit document is in place delineating how much time it would take to adequately address the essential elements
- All students have a prescribed program of study that documents access to courses
- **Written goals are available specifying the percentage of students who will score at a proficient or higher level on state assessments or benchmark assessments**
- **Written goals are available specifying the elimination of the achievement gap for all students**
- Written timelines are available containing specific benchmarks for each goal, including individual(s) responsible for the goal
- Reports, graphs, and charts are available for overall student achievement
- Evidence is available showing that reports, graphs, and charts are regularly updated to track growth in student achievement
- **Evidence is available that students who need instructional support outside of the regular classroom have had access to and taken advantage of such support**

Exemplary Practices In High Achievement, High Accountability Districts And Schools

Curriculum / Academic Programming
Standards-based
Clear instructional goals
Reading, literacy and vocabulary focus

Organization
Multiple options for Acceleration
Vertical and Grade Level PLC's
Uninterrupted Literacy and Math Blocks

Assessment
Data-driven
Continuous Formative Assessments
Clear and objective rubrics

Instructional Delivery
Student-centered
P-12 reading comprehension focus with complex texts
P-12 writing focus across all content areas
Instructional scaffolding
Differentiated strategies
School-wide focus on best practice instruction

Planning
Professional time allocated
PLC and individual planning
Connected to authentic staff development

Components to ensure a guaranteed and viable written curriculum

Answer the question: **What do students need to know and be able to do in this grade/course?**
Are written in student friendly language

Components to ensure a guaranteed and viable written curriculum

Pacing Guides or Curriculum Maps
- **Are used as a communication device**
- **Conceptualize a unit**
- **Enable consistent curriculum pacing and planning**
- **Highlight important vocabulary**
- **Enable students and parents to "see" the knowledge gained over time**

Components to ensure a guaranteed and viable written curriculum

<u>Unit Plans:</u>
Pull together the
- Standards
- **Essential Questions**
- Common Assessments and
- Learning Targets into a coherent, teachable framework

What has to be in place for districts to carry out the successful implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum?

ONE: the entire learning community has a clear understanding of the concept of curriculum.

Can everyone in your system say…

"I know what my students need to learn, what I need to teach so they learn it, and how to measure if they learned it"?

Would all teachers say…

"The written curriculum is non-negotiable"?

What has to be in place for districts to carry out the successful implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum?

TWO: The curriculum for each grade level and course must be:

- Clearly written,

- Thoroughly communicated,

- Measurable,

- Rigorous enough to challenge each student, and

- Relevant

QUESTIONS?