

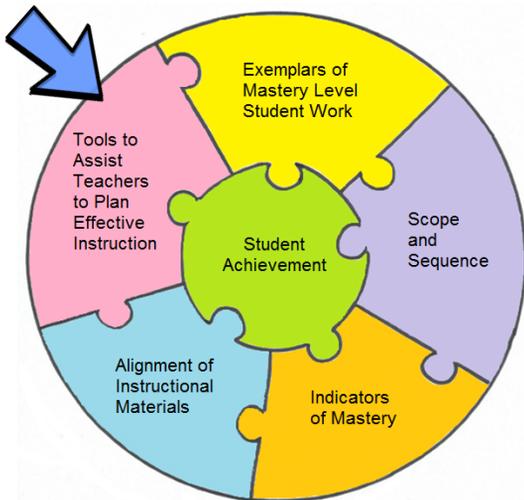
# Critical Question #1

## What do students need to know, understand, and be able to do? (Plan)

*What do leaders need to know and be able to do?*

**Fundamental Practice 1.** *District-produced curriculum documents, guides, or frameworks provide tools to assist teachers to plan effective instruction that focuses on “big ideas” along with the concepts and skills identified in the district’s guaranteed and viable curriculum.*

In addition to the district’s scope and sequence of grade-level expectations, curriculum documents often include supplemental instructional planning tools such as curriculum maps, or pacing guides, that provide general time frames for addressing grade-level expectations allowing flexibility for teachers to adjust for student learning needs. Curriculum guides can also identify instructional strategies to support classroom delivery of the district’s curriculum, as well as examples of formative assessment practices, to inform instruction.



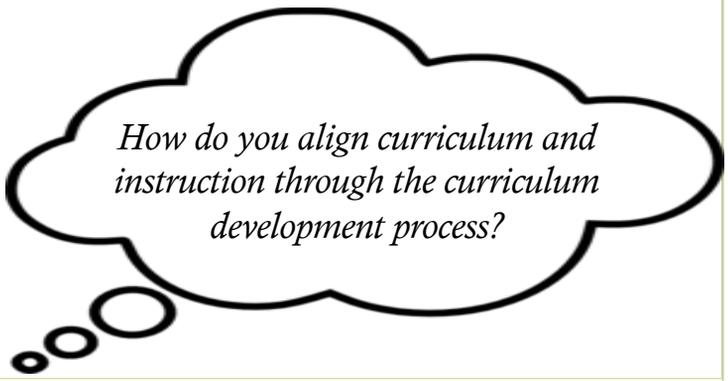
### Guiding Questions:

- Has the district produced a guaranteed and viable curriculum with a scope and sequence of all grade-level expectations and evidence outcomes preschool through high school?
- What are the elements of district curriculum documents that guide planning, instruction, and assessment for and of learning? How comprehensive are these documents?
- How does the district ensure curriculum documents are available and used by all teachers?
- How are teachers utilizing curriculum documents to guide their planning and teaching? How is this monitored?
- How would teachers describe the usability of curriculum documents?
- How do curriculum guides create intentional links to 21st century skills for students with interdisciplinary connections?

### Reflections:

1. As a leader, what is my role in ensuring this fundamental practice is taking place in my district and schools?
2. What are current barriers that are getting in the way of successfully implementing this fundamental practice systemically in my district and schools?
3. When I return to my district/school, I will complete the following three action steps to begin enhancing our (my and my staff’s) application of this fundamental practice:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_



## Is your planning team in consensus with what a curriculum is?

New Zealand implemented national standards, the New Zealand Curriculum, in 2008-09. In preparation of, and subsequent to implementation, many districts and schools engaged in a cycle of on-going review of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices. Such reviews were intended to increase coherence between different aspects of school practice, providing a more focused “big picture” framing of teaching and learning in the school. An important aspect of the review included district and school curriculum planning with the goal of improving coherence between curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. At districts and schools where this type of activity had not been undertaken, it was noticeable that there did not appear to be a collective view of teaching and learning. To view the article in its entirety: <http://nzcurriculum.fki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories/Case-studies/Curriculum-implementation/Theme-five>

### Steps to Take During the Planning and Development Phase

Step	Curriculum Goal	Instructional Goal	Timeframe	End Product
<b>Step 1:</b> Establish the Foundation	Analyze state and national standards	Identify and begin reading book for study group	Year 1	Philosophy and rationale for curriculum
<b>Step 2:</b> Data Analysis	Review national, state, and local test data Review surveys from parents, teachers, students, and administrators	Debrief book chapters Identify effective instructional practices for the content area through book study sessions and related articles	Year 1	Goals for graduates Course descriptions Effective instructional practices
<b>Step 3:</b> Assessments	Develop benchmark assessments around big ideas in the curriculum	Learn how to write constructed-response and performance event questions Develop rubrics	Summer Curriculum Camp	District performance assessments Rubrics
<b>Step 4:</b> Writing	Develop scope and sequence and curriculum map		Summer Curriculum Camp	Scope and sequence Curriculum map
<b>Step 5:</b> Resources Review	Review relevant texts with the team	Develop textbook review form Identify best instructional practices	Summer Curriculum Camp	Texts selected for pilot (2-3 per grade span)
<b>Step 6:</b> Pilot Process	Teachers pilot two units from each pilot text	Develop instructional policy for curriculum	Year 2	Select resources for curriculum
<b>Step 7:</b> Board Approval	Board of education reviews curriculum	Board of education reviews instruction policy	Year 2	Board of education approves curriculum and instruction
<b>Step 8:</b> Staff Development	Staff trains with new curriculum and materials	Train curriculum team members as trainers and curriculum mentors	Year 3	Post curriculum on the Web Select district trainers
<b>Step 9:</b> Implementation	Principals monitor implementation through curriculum maps	Mentors help monitor implementation in buildings	Years 3-7	Increased student achievement

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108005/chapters/Developing-Curriculum-Leadership-and-Design.aspx>

- A Curriculum:**
- Is the “unpacking” or the interpreting of the state standards into a set of skills to be learned.
- Is a well-conceived hierarchy of skills based on students’ cognitive, language, and social emotional development.
- Is developed by all teachers working collaborative grade-level and content area teams.
- Is a planning and teaching tool that affects instruction and is adapted and differentiated to correspond to the needs and strengths of the learners.
- Includes content, skills, assessments, state standards, and other information that teachers use in their planning and teaching.
- Describes what the students need to know and be able to do.
- Is aligned with the state standards and across and within grade levels and content areas with increasing cognitive difficulty at each level.

Bredenkamp, S. & Rosegrant, T. (1995), (Eds.). Reaching potentials: Transforming early childhood curriculum and assessment, Volume 2. Washington, DC: National Association for Early Childhood Education.

**Connect to Resources**  
For additional resources on curriculum development, visit the fundamental practice #1 section of the toolkit.