Rapid City Area Schools



Process for Creating

Instructional Roadmaps

Teachers’ Facilitation Guide

**August 2013**

Instructional roadmap design is rooted in the research of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, and the concept of “teaching for understanding.” (1998) The backwards design process outlined by Wiggins and McTighe in *Understanding by Design* fits seamlessly with the first two critical questions of Professional Learning Communities:

1. What do we want students to know and be able to do?
2. How will we know when students have learned?

Developing instructional roadmaps will help us to deepen our understanding of PLC, and allow us to ensure that no student slips through the cracks. This work is foundational for moving the Professional Learning Communities initiative forward.

Instructional roadmap design is time consuming, and sometimes frustrating, work. Planning in this way demands a difficult paradigm shift for teachers, shifting the focus to learning rather than teaching. By clearly outlining a process, some of the anxiety generated from operating under a new paradigm can be reduced.

**Curriculum Design in a PLC**

There are three distinct roles in creating curriculum in the context of professional learning communities: the District’s role, the Team role, and the Individual Teacher’s role. All three roles are crucial for creating the best possible outcomes for students.

*District Role:*

The District’s role is to establish the essential learning by determining priority/power standards for each grade level and content area, and to develop Unit Pacing Guides that outline the timeframes for instruction across the district. The creation of these Unit Pacing Guides should utilize the accordion model; ultimately, the Unit Pacing Guide will be created by a representative group of teacher-leaders, with guidance from content-area coordinators. It is the Unit Pacing Guide that establishes the District’s guaranteed, viable curriculum.

*Team Role:*

The Team role involves PLC teams creating instructional roadmaps based on the Unit Pacing Guide. The team’s task is to contextualize the Unit Pacing Guide for their subset of students by developing conceptual or thematic units of study. Considering student data and professional judgment, PLC teams will prioritize learning targets, establish proficiency, and build an assessment and learning plan. The instructional roadmap process provides an opportunity for job-embedded professional development to take place as teachers build their knowledge of content standards and share their best practices; building-level ownership allows teams to meet the different needs of varied student populations.

*Individual Teacher Role:*

Individual teachers have an important part to play in curriculum development. Each teacher has the autonomy to decide how the instructional roadmap will be implemented within his or her classroom. While the team decides *what* targets to teach and *when* to teach them, teachers still have the flexibility to decide *how* that instruction takes place in the classroom.

Using the instructional roadmap is a non-negotiable; deciding the best methods for instruction is up to each teacher, as long as it is in keeping with District instructional philosophy. Some teams may decide to plan their lessons collaboratively and others may not. As long as the agreed upon learning targets can be assessed in common, lesson planning remains an individual teacher’s responsibility.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| District Role | Team Role | Teacher’s Role |
| * Establish priority/power standards
* Develop unit pacing guides
 | * Create instructional roadmaps
	+ Learning targets
	+ Proficiency level descriptors
	+ Assessment and learning plan
 | * Lesson plans
* Learning experiences
* Criteria for success
 |

**Unit Pacing Guides vs. Instructional Roadmaps**

It may be helpful to further delineate the differences between a Unit Pacing Guide and an Instructional Roadmap.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Unit Pacing Guide* | *Instructional Roadmaps* |
| * Outlines priority/power standards in a broad way
* Establishes a consistent timeframe for instruction across buildings
* Are established at the district level using the accordion model
 | * Determine the essential learning of the pacing guide within each building by establishing focus learning targets and proficiency level descriptions
* Consider the unique factors of each student and staff population
* Include an assessment plan
* Are established at the team level
 |

**Instructional Roadmaps Defined**

An instructional roadmap bridges the gap between district-level curriculum expectations and the work that individual teachers do. Using the District Unit Pacing Guide as a starting point, teams of teachers collaboratively develop conceptual or thematic units that integrate formative and summative assessment into the learning-assessment process.

A collaboratively created instructional roadmap will take shape in four stages:

* Stage One: Determine the essential learning based on standards
* Stage Two: Determine what evidence to collect
* Stage Three: Calendar assessments and learning targets
* Stage Four: Increase teacher capacity

**An Overview of the Four-Stage Process for Creating Instructional Roadmaps**

The specific processes for creating instructional roadmaps may vary slightly from content area to content area, but in general, the four stages will be similar. Step-by-step processes for each content area can be found at the end of this document.

*Stage One: Determine the essential learning based on standards*

Stage One is the most time consuming part of the instructional roadmap process, but it is absolutely essential and cannot be rushed or skipped. It is during this stage that many teachers experience a high level of discomfort and will be tempted to jump ahead to Stage Three or Four.

Determining the essential learning begins by examining the Unit Pacing Guide. The priority/power standards determined by the district are listed by time frame. All of the standards listed are expected to be taught within this timeframe; the emphasis will be decided at the team level during the second stage of the process.

Teams unpack the priority standards into student-friendly learning targets (SEE APPENDIX A FOR TEMPLATE). The importance of this step cannot be overstated; through the process of unpacking the standards, teams will gain a deeper understanding of the standards, and may begin to see how some learning targets can be embedded in the instruction of other targets.

Then, teams create essential questions that frame the concept of the unit. If learning targets are the *what?,* and criteria for success is the *how?,* then essential questions are the *why?* of the unit. Essential questions are meant to be broad questions that invite and sustain student inquiry; essential questions don’t have a simple answer. These essential questions should be derived from standards without being overly specific (SEE APPENDIX A FOR EXAMPLES).

Teams may decide to divide a unit timeframe into smaller sub-units. For example a 12-week “narrative” unit might be divided into two 6-week units focusing on specific genres within the narrative model or a 9-week quarter might be split into two 4.5 week units.

*Stage Two: Determine what evidence to collect*

During Stage Two, teams consider what evidence of student learning to collect, and for what purpose. This stage is also very time consuming, and may challenge the thinking of some teachers. Encourage teams to take their time with this work; rushing Stage Two will lead to frustration during the data cycle.

At the beginning of this stage, teams will determine what learning targets to prioritize (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL). While all of the standards listed in the Unit Pacing Guide need to be taught, these focus learning targets will be formally assessed during the course of the unit.

Once the focus learning targets have been established, teams will write proficiency level descriptions for each focus learning target (PLDs - SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES). The more specific these PLDs are, the easier they will be to use.

Beginning with the end in mind, teams draft a common summative assessment or assessments (in some literature, the summative assessment might be referred to as a “posttest”) that includes all of the focus learning targets. This assessment can be a formal test, a writing assignment, a performance, or any type of culminating project; the important part is that the focus learning targets are assessed. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES).

Once the common summative assessment has been created, teams will once again examine their focus learning targets. The intent this time is to determine which learning targets merit a common formative assessment. Not all of the targets on the summative assessment will need to be common formatively assessed. Using specific criteria, teams will be able to narrow down the number of targets that need CFAs. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL)

After determining which focus learning targets to create CFAs for, teams will actually create their CFAs (again, in some literature, the CFA may be referred to as the “pretest”). The CFAs should be derived from the summative assessment, meaning that the assessment tasks on the CFA will be similar in format and rigor to the tasks on the common summative assessment. By crafting assessments using this process, teams will create an aligned assessment plan that provides context for the CFAs.

*Stage Three: Calendar assessments and learning targets*

Finally, teams determine when to give assessments, and decide when the team will teach specific learning targets. If time and care have been taken in the first two stages, this stage will move relatively quickly.

Teams create assessment plans by calendaring their summative assessment first, followed by their CFAs (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES). Time for reteaching should be included in the plan. Then, teams calendar their learning targets to best scaffold their students’ learning. (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES)

*Stage Four: Increase teacher capacity*

The fourth stage has the loosest structure of the four stages. Each team can decide how collaborative they want to be within this stage. Teams build their collective capacity by sharing resources and strategies for instruction.

Some teams may decide to closely align their instruction and lesson plan together; other teams may decide to simply share their individual practices, taking or leaving any strategies that are shared.

A misconception of PLC work is that teaching strategies should be aligned during the planning process. At this point in the PLC process (prior to any data collection), instructional strategies don’t necessarily need to be tightly aligned. Later on during the data cycle – after data from CFAs or pretests have been analyzed – a tighter alignment may be necessary.

**The Tight**

The following specifies “the tight” regarding the process of creating instructional roadmaps:

* The process will include all four stages completed in order, with evidence of each stage of work. The use of specific formats is a building or team-level decision.
* Instructional Roadmaps are rooted in the Unit Pacing Guides; teams can pull in additional standards, but the emphasis of any unit of instruction must align to the Unit Pacing Guide in order to ensure a guaranteed, viable curriculum.

**Secondary Literacy Instructional Roadmap Process**

Stage One: A suggested template outlining each stage is available in Appendix D of this document.

Step 1: Unpack all of the priority standards from the Unit Pacing Guide into student-friendly learning targets (SEE APPENDIX A FOR TEMPLATE).

Step 2: Create essential questions that frame the concept of the unit (SEE APPENDIX A FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATE). Your team may decide to divide a unit timeframe into smaller sub-units.

Example:

The 12-week “narrative” unit might be divided into two 6-week units focusing on memoir and short story.

Stage Two:

Step 1: Determine what learning targets to prioritize (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL). While all of the standards listed in the Unit Pacing Guide need to be taught, these focus learning targets will be formally assessed during the course of the unit.

Step 2: Write proficiency level descriptions for each focus learning target (PLDs - SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES). The more specific these PLDs are, the easier they will be to use.

Step 3: Draft a common summative assessment that includes all of the focus learning targets. This assessment can be a formal test, a writing assignment, a performance, or any type of culminating project (SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES).

Step 4: Using specific criteria, decide which focus learning targets need CFAs. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL)

Step 5: Create CFAs derived from the summative assessment. The assessment tasks on the CFA will be similar in format and rigor to the tasks on the common summative assessment.

Stage Three:

Step 1: Create an assessment plan (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES).

* Calendar the summative assessment
* Calendar the CFAs
	+ Time for reteaching should be included in the plan.

Step 2: Create an instructional plan

* Calendar focus learning targets to best scaffold student learning. (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES)

Stage Four:

Step 1: Share resources and strategies with colleagues.

**Secondary Content Area Instructional Roadmap Process**

Stage One: A suggested template outlining each stage is available in Appendix D of this document.

Step 1: Unpack all of the power standards from the Unit Pacing Guide into student-friendly learning targets (SEE APPENDIX A FOR TEMPLATE).

Step 2: Create essential questions that frame the concept of the unit (SEE APPENDIX A FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATE. Your team may decide to divide a unit timeframe into smaller sub-units.

Example:

First quarter might be divided into two 4 ½ -week units.

Stage Two:

Step 1: Determine what learning targets to prioritize (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL). While all of the standards listed in the Unit Pacing Guide need to be taught, these focus learning targets will be formally assessed during the course of the unit.

Step 2: Write proficiency level descriptions for each focus learning target (PLDs - SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES). The more specific these PLDs are, the easier they will be to use.

Step 3: Draft a common summative assessment that includes all of the focus learning targets. This assessment can be a formal test, a writing assignment, a performance, or any type of culminating project. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES).

Step 4: Using specific criteria, decide which focus learning targets need CFAs. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL)

Step 5: Create CFAs derived from the summative assessment. The assessment tasks on the CFA will be similar in format and rigor to the tasks on the common summative assessment.

Stage Three:

Step 1: Create an assessment plan (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES).

* Calendar the summative assessment
* Calendar the CFAs
	+ Time for reteaching should be included in the plan.

Step 2: Create an instructional plan

* Calendar focus learning targets to best scaffold student learning. (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES)

Stage Four:

Step 1: Share resources and strategies with colleagues.

**Secondary Science Instructional Roadmap Process**

Stage Zero: Create a building-level pacing guide

Step 1: Create a pacing guide that delineates specific timeframes for instruction. The pacing guide will include ALL of the South Dakota Science Standards.

Step 2: Establish power standards for each timeframe using the criteria of endurance, leverage, and/or readiness; approximately 1/3 of the standards will be power standards.

- NOTE: All of the standards will be taught; they will not all be formally assessed.

Stage One: A suggested template outlining each stage is available in Appendix D of this document.

Step 1: Unpack all of the power standards from the Unit Pacing Guide into student-friendly learning targets (SEE APPENDIX A FOR TEMPLATE).

Step 2: Create essential questions that frame the concept of the unit (SEE APPENDIX A FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATE). Your team may decide to divide a unit timeframe into smaller sub-units.

Example:

First quarter might be divided into two 4 ½ -week units.

Stage Two:

Step 1: Determine what learning targets to prioritize (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL). While all of the standards listed in the Unit Pacing Guide need to be taught, these focus learning targets will be formally assessed during the course of the unit.

Step 2: Write proficiency level descriptions for each focus learning target (PLDs - SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES). The more specific these PLDs are, the easier they will be to use.

Step 3: Draft a common summative assessment that includes all of the focus learning targets. This assessment can be a formal test, a writing assignment, a performance, or any type of culminating project (SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES).

Step 4: Using specific criteria, decide which focus learning targets need CFAs. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL)

Step 5: Create CFAs derived from the summative assessment. The assessment tasks on the CFA will be similar in format and rigor to the tasks on the common summative assessment.

Stage Three:

Step 1: Create an assessment plan (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES).

* Calendar the summative assessment
* Calendar the CFAs
	+ Time for reteaching should be included in the plan.

Step 2: Create an instructional plan

* Calendar focus learning targets to best scaffold student learning. (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES)

Stage Four:

Step 1: Share resources and strategies with colleagues.

**Elementary Math Instructional Roadmap Process**

Stage One: A suggested template outlining each stage is available in Appendix D of this document.

Step 1: Unpack all of the priority standards from the Unit Pacing Guide into student-friendly learning targets (SEE APPENDIX A FOR TEMPLATE).

Step 2: Create essential questions that frame the concept of the unit (SEE APPENDIX A FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATE).

Stage Two:

Step 1: After reviewing all of the learning targets from the priority standards, determine what learning targets to prioritize (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL). While all of the standards listed in the Unit Pacing Guide need to be taught, these focus learning targets will be formally assessed during the course of the unit.

Step 2: Write proficiency level descriptions for each focus learning target (PLDs - SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES). The more specific these PLDs are, the easier they will be to use.

Step 3: Draft a common summative assessment or posttest that includes all of the focus learning targets. This assessment can be a formal test, a writing assignment, a performance, or any type of culminating project (SEE APPENDIX B FOR EXAMPLES).

Step 4: Using specific criteria, decide which focus learning targets need CFAs or pretest. (SEE APPENDIX B FOR PROTOCOL)

Step 5: Create CFAs or a pretest derived from the summative assessment. The assessment tasks on the CFA will be similar in format and rigor to the tasks on the common summative assessment.

Stage Three:

Step 1: Create an assessment plan (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES).

* Calendar the summative assessment
* Calendar the CFAs

Step 2: Create an instructional plan

* Calendar focus learning targets to best scaffold student learning. (SEE APPENDIX C FOR EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES)

Stage Four:

Step 1: Share resources and strategies with colleagues.

**Appendices**

The following appendices include sample templates, protocols, and examples for each stage of Instructional Roadmap Design. It is important to understand that these resources are intended to help teams – but teams are NOT required to use these specific resources. For example, two different options for unpacking standards into learning targets are included, but if teachers have another method that nets similar results, then teachers should feel free to use their own method.

Appendix A – Stage 1 Resources

* Unpacking Template
* Essential Questions

Appendix B – Stage 2 Resources

* Protocol: Determining Focus Learning Targets
* Proficiency Level Descriptions example
* Summative Assessment Example
* Protocol: Determining CFA Learning Targets

Appendix C – Stage 3 Resources

* Sample assessment plans
* Calendar templates

Appendix D – Roadmap Template