

# CURRICULUM SUPPORT — GUIDE —

W O R K B O O K

Key Action 1.3: Develop the Rubric and Prepare  
for Reviews

# I.3: DEVELOP THE RUBRIC AND PREPARE FOR REVIEWS

	Key Action I.1: Plan Your Process Key Action I.2: Establish the Vision	Step I.3.A: Solicit Stakeholder Input Step I.3.B: Develop the Rubric Step I.3.C: Identify the Options You will Review Step I.3.D: Train the Review Committee on the Rubric and Process
<b>Phase I: Select</b> >	<b>Key Action I.3: Develop the Rubric and Prepare for Reviews</b> Key Action I.4: Review, Pilot, and Decide Key Action I.5: Procure and Distribute Materials	

## WHAT IS THE GOAL?

The goal of this key action is to determine the final rubric you will use, what materials you are going to review, and prepare the Review Committee to conduct the reviews. The goal is also to use this moment to gather broad stakeholder input on the wishes for the materials to inform to process.

## WHY IS THIS KEY ACTION IMPORTANT?

Getting clear about what is most essential to your final materials is hard but important work. Doing this before anyone opens a book allows reviewers to know what they need to look for and for the community to trust that there are objective criteria guiding the process. Then, a clear operational plan for how the reviews will take place and a training plan to ensure the Review Committee knows what they should look for allows for everyone to be ready for the reviews.

## EXPLANATION OF LANGUAGE

We use the word **rubric** to refer to a clear articulation of the criteria and a vision into what evidence will be required to evaluate those criteria. We use the distinction between **non-negotiable** criteria and **nice-to-have** criteria as a method of prioritization.



## I.3.B: DEVELOP THE RUBRIC

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

i. What do we need in our materials given our vision of instructional excellence?

ii. What are must-haves? What are nice-to-haves?

iii. What matters most to our community?

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iv. For the must-haves, what would they look like to meet that criteria?

v. What evidence do we need to look for to determine if the must-haves meet our bar?

### NOTES

The resource [Curriculum Criteria](#) includes an initial list of questions to consider when determining criteria as well as sample criteria early implementers used that you can use as a starting point.

The team that develops the rubric can be the Selection Team or a combination of the Selection Team and Review Committee.

These guiding questions invite you to develop a rubric. Check out the [Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool \(IMET\)](#) from Student Achievement Partners to see an example rubric and review tool.

## I.3.C: IDENTIFY THE OPTIONS YOU WILL REVIEW

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

i. Given our must-haves, which materials should we review?

ii. Are there any materials that do not meet the minimum requirements that we can rule out before the review?

iii. What is the timeline that reviewers will have to conduct the reviews?

iv. What materials will reviewers need access to and how will we get them access?

v. How will we collect Review Committee notes and final scores?

### NOTES

The [EdReports](#) website is a well-respected review of available math and ELA materials.

If you are using a recommended list from your state as your starting point (and you have the option of a waiver), it may be beneficial to look beyond the list to ensure that there aren't any additional high-quality materials worth reviewing.

Every set of materials you review will require significant time for each and every reviewer. Narrowing the list before the broader review will significantly improve the efficiency of the process.

Depending on your review team, you may need to identify the list of materials you will review before this step.



## Questions for Naming Curriculum Criteria

*This resource is a starting point for the kinds of questions you can ask stakeholders in a survey or focus group. The responses to these questions should help generate curriculum criteria.*

### Stakeholder Group: Teacher

- Which instructional values must be reflected in a curriculum?
- What is most helpful and least helpful about our current curriculum?
- What should student resources include?
- What should teacher resources include?
- What should assessment tools include?
- What should family resources include?
- What role should technology play in a curriculum?
- What factors about our student population should be considered?
- What do our teachers need in a curriculum to support a variety of learning needs?
- What factors about our teacher population should be considered?
- What role should professional learning play in curriculum implementation?

### Stakeholder Group: Families/Community

- Which instructional values must be reflected in a curriculum?
- What factors about our student population should be considered?
- What should a curriculum provide for families?
- What should family resources include?
- What should a curriculum provide for the broader community?
- What role should technology play in a curriculum?

### Selection Plan

*This template is a place to record projects and tasks that your team will take on during selection. Modify this to a format that works for your team. At the bottom of the template, there is a list of sample projects and tasks to help you get started.*

**Decision-Making (set in Key Action I.1.B, Plan Your Process):**

Key Decision	Who is responsible for making it?	Who will consult?

**Key Stakeholders and Communications (set in Key Action I.1.E, Plan Your Process,):**

Stakeholder Group	Communication Channels	Communications Needed

**Schedule of Events (set in Key Action I.1.C, Map the Schedule of Events):**

Key Event (include ideal selection date)	Date

**Vision (set in Key Action I.2.B, Establish the Vision):**

**Core Beliefs (set in Key Action I.2.B, Establish the Vision):**



**Work Plan:** Below are descriptions of some of the terms across the top row.

- **Project:** describes the bucket of work; many organize projects by key action (i.e. coaching)
- **Task:** describes an action step in the project (i.e. determine who will lead upfront materials training)

Project	Task	Owner	Deadline

**Sample projects and tasks:**

Project: Form the Review Committee

- Create role and responsibility doc for Review Committee
- Determine what roles need to be represented on the Review Committee
- Finalize criteria for Review Committee members
- Email committee to determine meeting availability
- Communicate who is serving on the committee to the system and share their role

Project: Leading the Review

- Train all Review Committee members on the rubric and selection process
- Review materials
- Determine plan for pilot
- Make final selection decision

## Curriculum Criteria

*This resource is a list of questions for a system to consider to generate curriculum criteria, as well as a list of sample curriculum criteria for middle school ELA.*

### Questions to Consider:

- How will we evaluate alignment to our state standards and assessment(s)?
- What in our instructional vision do we want to see reflected in the curriculum? What would that look like in the materials?
- What is unique about our community that we want to consider in selecting curriculum?
- What supports do our teachers need for a variety of learner needs (i.e. English learners, students with disabilities, students behind grade level, gifted students, etc.)?
- What is our district/school capacity to support curriculum? Can we do more than one?

### Sample Curriculum Selection Criteria

- Includes specific resources for English language learners
- Includes information for families that is written in multiple languages
- Includes activities that encourage physical movement
- Includes activities and resources that support the arts
- Cannot require access to technology or the internet
- Includes regular opportunities for students to work with computers and other technology
- We have high teacher turnover in our district – since we constantly have to train teachers on how to use the curriculum, we need materials that are easy to understand and use
- We value engagement with authentic texts – we need an ELA curriculum that uses high-quality trade books, not commissioned texts
- The curriculum should support students’ social, emotional, and character development (i.e. incorporates collaborative discussion protocols, includes a lot of group work, encourages self-reflection, etc.)
- Emphasizes vocabulary development

## Review Committee Training Agenda, Email, and Survey

*This resource provides an agenda for training the Review Committee on the rubric and procedures for curriculum review.*

Who will deliver this training?	Ms. Hall
When and where will this training occur?	Thursday, February 9, 4:30-7:00 pm, at the district office
What materials need to be prepared in advance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of the key criteria list</li> <li>• Copies of the curriculum selection rubric</li> <li>• Sample sets of one curriculum for the committee to review and norm on – bring four sets of materials so each small group can have their own</li> </ul>
Activity	Description
Review key criteria for selection and vision for instruction (8-10 min)	<p>Have the Review Committee read the list of key criteria for curriculum selection as well as the vision for excellent instruction for the content area. Discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are these criteria important for our students and district community?</li> <li>• What would it look like for these criteria to be reflected in a curriculum?</li> <li>• What are the links between the criteria and our vision for excellent instruction?</li> </ul>
Review the rubric (5-7 min)	Distribute copies of the rubric. Quickly orient committee members to the rubric – explain the range of potential scores, how the rows and columns are organized, etc. Then allow time for committee members to read it closely. Invite committee members to underline important words or phrases.
Practice and norm with the rubric (120 min, includes break)	<p>Split the Review Committee into small groups. Each small group will review the same curriculum, so they can discuss and norm on scores. Have groups assign scores to each row of the rubric. Remind committee members to record evidence on their rubrics that supports their assigned score.</p> <p>After the small groups complete their review, have each small group report their scores to the whole group. Use the following discussion questions as a guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What score did you give for this rubric row?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence from the materials support your score?</li> <li>• Did you consider assigning a different score to this row? If so, why (what evidence supports this alternative score)?</li> </ul> <p>If groups disagree on the score for a rubric row, review the evidence together. Try to reach consensus on all scores.</p> <p>Additional discussion questions to support rubric norming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which rubric row do you think is most difficult to score? Why?</li> <li>• Which rubric row do you think is easiest to score? Why?</li> <li>• Where do you think we're most likely to disagree on scores? Why? What can we do to ensure our scoring is as consistent as possible?</li> <li>• We gave these materials a 2 on this rubric row. What would have to change in these materials for us to give them a 3? (<i>Feel free to use any score for this question. The purpose of this question is to help committee members think about the differences between scores and what evidence of each score looks like.</i>)</li> </ul> <p><i>Facilitation Notes: Depending on the number of groups and available curriculum sets, some groups may need to share materials. If time is limited, each group may not be able to get to every rubric row. In this situation, assign a few rubric rows to each small group. Make sure that more than one group evaluates each rubric row, so the groups have the opportunity to discuss and norm on scores.</i></p>
<p>Explain what will happen next, including procedures for additional curriculum review (5-10 min)</p>	<p>We will have two more meetings. At each meeting we will review one set of materials together. Like tonight, we will work in small groups and then norm on scores as a whole group. After we have scores for all the curricula, we will determine if we need to gather additional information before making a final decision.</p>
<p><b>Supporting Resources</b></p>	
<p>Email announcing the training:</p> <p>Dear Curriculum Review Committee,</p>	

We are excited to begin the process of reviewing materials! We believe that high-quality materials will help our teachers reach all students with lessons that are engaging and meaningful. Making sure that we as a committee know what we're looking for in potential materials is an important step in achieving our goal. This email includes important information about our committee training.

We will meet for our training on Thursday, February 9 from 4:30-7:00 pm at the district office. The district office is located at 123 Main Street. During this time, we will review the criteria we'll use to select a new curriculum. We'll use a rubric that is aligned to these criteria to score one set of materials together. Scoring this first set of materials together will help ensure that we all know what we're looking for and have a shared understanding of what each score means.

There is no pre-work for this training. However, it may be helpful to review the materials from our previous training on academic standards.

We look forward to seeing you on February 9!

Ms. Hall

Below is a list of possible survey questions to share with committee members after the training. Each question, if not otherwise indicated, should be rated on a 1-5 scale where 1 = disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat agree, and 5 = agree.

- I understand how to use the curriculum selection rubric.
- I know what kinds of evidence to look for when I'm scoring each rubric row (*Consider asking this question for each row in the rubric. This question may reveal that committee members understand the scoring of some rubric rows better than others.*)
- I'm confident in my ability to score each rubric row and support my score with evidence.
- I believe that our review committee has a common understanding of what each rubric row and score looks like.
- This training helped prepare me to review curricula and score them consistently.
- What questions do you have about reviewing curricula? (open ended)
- What additional support would be helpful in preparing you to review curricula? (open ended)

# About Us

The Curriculum Support Guide was written and designed by Instruction Partners, an education non-profit that works shoulder to shoulder with educators to support great teaching and accelerate student learning. Our work with schools and systems is grounded in the instructional core, and we provide coaching, action planning, and professional development. In the last three years, we have observed hundreds of classrooms and been fortunate to partner with many schools and school systems. We specialize in supporting smaller school systems, who may lack capacity but are able to make big changes quickly.

**Many thanks to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for their generous support of this work.**

# Thank You

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