

# CREATE A GUARANTEED, VIABLE, AND RIGOROUS CURRICULUM BY STARTING WITH POWER STANDARDS

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## **Guaranteed**

*In our district, no matter who teaches a given course or grade level, it is guaranteed that students have the opportunity to achieve a set of standards.*

## **Viable**

*There is enough time to teach and for the students to learn the standards identified as guaranteed.*

## **Rigorous**

*Helping students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, often ambiguous, and personally or emotionally challenging.*

## **Criteria for Creating POWER STANDARDS**

What do our students need for success - in school this year, next year, and in following years (**leverage/transference**), in life (**endurance**), and on our state tests?

**Endurance:** Will this standard or indicator provide students with knowledge and skills that will be of value beyond a single test or date? Example: proficiency in reading will endure throughout a student's academic career and professional life.

**Leverage/Transference:** Will this provide knowledge and skills that will be of value in multiple disciplines? "Many approaches to teaching and learning look equivalent when the only measure of learning is temporary recall of information specifically presented. Instructional differences become more apparent when evaluated from the perspective of how well the learning transfers to new problems and settings" (How People Learn, p.77). Example: proficiency in creating and analyzing graphs, tables and charts will help students in math, science, social studies and language arts.

**Readiness for the next level of learning:** Will this provide students with essential knowledge and skills that are necessary for success in the next grade or next level of instruction? Example: Fluent use of fractions, decimals and percents is an essential skill for students in the sixth grade as they go into pre-algebra in the seventh grade.

**Step 1:** Get comfortable with the fact that the process is specifically designed to *eliminate content* from the curriculum; however, this process is *not about the elimination of standards, it is about prioritization- and prioritization does **not** imply neglect*. Essential skills/concepts are automatically excluded from consideration as a Power Standard.

**Step 2:** Gather materials – copies of the Common Core Standards (where applicable), state standards (where applicable), curriculum guides, existing content/assessment frameworks, and information about what students need to be successful in the next grade or course.

**Step 3:** Review the criteria in bold above and begin the process of prioritizing the standards that are *essential* - or **guaranteed** and **viable**. This can be done individually or as a group.

- Identify a note taker
- Using the CC or State Standards, review the standards and mark the standards that are essential or must be guaranteed make sure to maintain the standards numbering/designation – the goal is to stay **around 10** and certainly **no more than 12** Power Standards.
- Individuals then come together to compare and discuss their selections with colleagues. Discuss the differences between the members of the group. Share reasoning why a standard was or wasn't chosen. Does the reasoning fit with the criteria above? The note taker should note similarities and differences. The group should work to reach preliminary consensus.

**Step 4:** Consult the state's test map specifications and/or district test data.

- Revise preliminary power standards to reflect what will be tested. If an essential standard was left off of the list (that is, it was not initially deemed essential but is obviously a tested standard) it should be added in the appropriate place within the prioritized list.
- Record selections in the Power Standards template (at this stage, it may be helpful to record any pertinent discussion/information about that standard).

**Step 5:** Review the standards that were **not** marked as essential or guaranteed.

- As a group or individually, prioritize these standards from most important (1) to least important (10). Record the prioritization and post below the guaranteed curriculum for the same content area and/or grade level.
- If done individually, the group should come together to compare and discuss their prioritization. The group should work to reach preliminary consensus; the goal is to create a "good-to-get-to" curriculum that is NOT guaranteed and viable.

**Step 6:** Arrange cross-grade "Power Standards exchanges" to assure vertical alignment. Be prepared for the need to revisit and or explain your selections with another grade level team.

- Look for vertical alignment within a **grade span** - identifying gaps, overlaps, or omissions *from grade to grade*. NOTE: There will be some standards that do not carry on through all grade levels. For example: math standards for time and money may be mastered at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and are not mentioned thereafter.
- Revise Power Standards as needed after consulting the lower or high grade level team (deciding which grade should address the gap, overlap, or omission).
- Make one final pass at the documents looking for consistency in language and semantics.

**Step 7:** For a given content area, the product should be a list of "Power Standards" that make up the guaranteed and viable curriculum. Below the Power Standards teams should list the prioritized "good-to-get-to" curriculum targets which are NOT guaranteed.