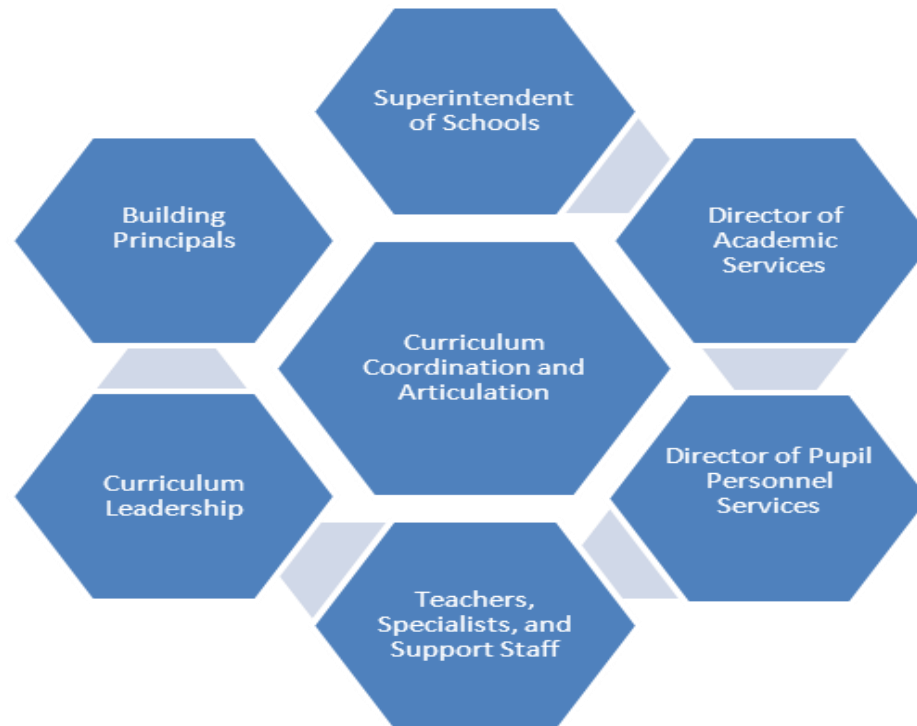


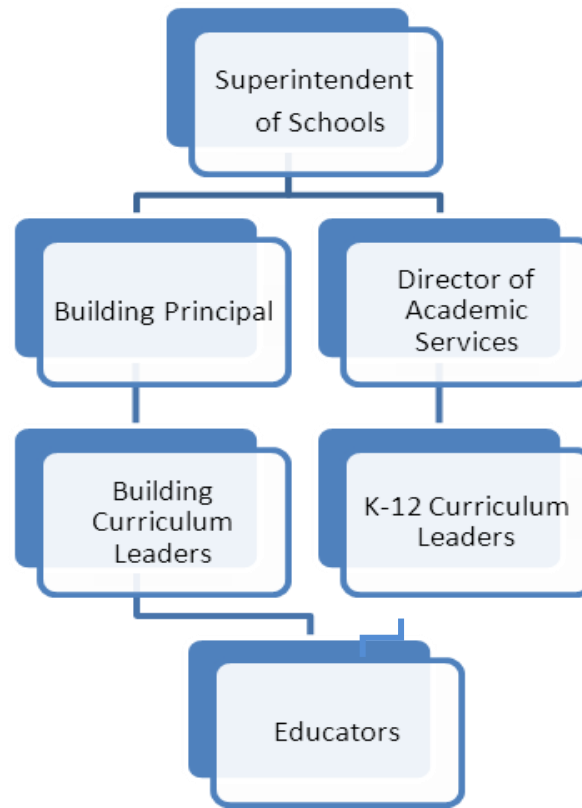
Introduction

“The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is developing the ability of school personnel to function as professional learning communities” (DuFour). Accepting that premise, the Curriculum Department of the North Reading Public Schools offers a process for continual curriculum review that endeavors to engage professionals from each of its learning communities in a collaborative effort to evaluate, revise and redefine curriculum and instruction throughout our district. In order to achieve this we must dedicate time and resources to bring professionals from all levels together to pursue collaborative investigation of best practices and current trends in teaching and learning. This plan proposes to use curriculum design and evaluation as catalyst for this collaboration thus fostering a professional learning community. For our purposes curriculum is defined to be not only the organization of courses offered by North Reading Public Schools but also the plan of delivery which guides instructional pedagogy, choice of materials and assessment. The curriculum will never be “finished”; it will be continually reviewed through a four year cycle overseen by our Curriculum Leaders, Principals, and the Director of Academic Services. The charge of this oversight organization is to provide leadership; develop policy and standards to guide the Subject Area Curriculum Councils work; and stay abreast of cross-disciplinary trends and evaluate their purposefulness in fulfilling the stated mission of the North Reading Public Schools.



Shared Leadership

In our Professional Learning Community it is recognized that developing and maintaining a viable curriculum is the shared responsibility of all educators in the North Reading Public Schools. Every member of our community is provided with an opportunity to guide decision making as it relates to curriculum and instruction. By increasing participation in shaping the curriculum and engaging the end-user in the design process we strive to create not merely a paper record of what we teach but rather a living document that meets the philosophical beliefs outlined in our mission statement and the ever changing needs of our students.



Leadership Structure

Our current Curriculum Leadership structure involves the Superintendent of Schools who oversees the Building Principals at the school level and the Director of Academic Services at the district level. Each building has curriculum leaders in four content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. There are also K-12 leaders in Physical Education, Foreign Language, Art, Performing Arts and a high school leader in Business. In addition, each building has a Special Education leader who helps to coordinate curriculum modifications for students on an Individualized Education Program. The messages from the building and district leaders are related to the Curriculum Leaders who then relate the messages to the educators individually and through curriculum councils. The educators, in turn, report findings, questions, and concerns through the Curriculum Leaders to the building and district leaders. This “figure eight” approach to communication helps to facilitate communication between all educators, leaders, and administrators in the Professional Learning Community.

The Curriculum Review Cycle

The Curriculum Review Cycle is a repeating three phase plan for continuous quality improvement of our curriculum and instructional practices. It requires that we continually evaluate of what is taught and how we teach each subject area. The goal is to ensure that our pedagogy is current and utilizes best practice to provide the highest quality education for our students. The Curriculum Review Cycle is outlined on pages 6-8.

Definition of Committees

<i>Curriculum Standards Committee</i>	
Purpose	Interdisciplinary & K-12 District Oversight
Duration	Standing Committee
Make-Up	Director of Academic Services[Chair], Building Principal/s, PPS Representative, an appointed Representative from each building [2 year term]
Credits	Credits awarded to educators based on hours.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop curriculum policies and procedures. • Serve as District Determined Measures committee • Develop a format for curriculum guides (Edwin/Atlas) • Monitor Work of Curriculum Councils. • Reconcile Implementation Plans of Curriculum Councils to create a district five-year plan including professional development and financial support for the acquisition of support materials. • Develop Budget Recommendations. • Monitor interdisciplinary initiatives such as <i>writing across the curriculum; and technology integration across the curriculum.</i> • Perform a needs assessment to identify cross grade-level, cross curricular or targeted areas for improvement such as <i>a unified elementary reading program; the establishment of a K-12 health and wellness program; or how to improve the reporting of student achievement.</i>

Definition of Committees (cont.)

<i>Curriculum Councils</i>	
<i>Purpose</i>	K-12 Subject Area Oversight
<i>Duration</i>	Standing Committee
<i>Make-Up</i>	Director of Academic Services [Advisor], Curriculum Leader(s) [Facilitators], Curriculum Specialists, Classroom Teachers and Special Education teachers with responsibilities to the subject or grade level. [1 year term]
<i>PDPS/Credits</i>	Awarded to teachers based on hours met and outside work.
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Committees meeting monthly • Oversee the Subject Area Curriculum Review Cycle (see attached outline) • Review Annual Assessment Data pertinent to the subject area and report out findings and suggestions for improvement • Review Frameworks and Common Core State Standards • Develop Common Assessments • Act as the steering committee for curriculum in each discipline area. • Articulate and communicate the K-12 vision. • Provide a forum for K-12 teachers with interest in or responsibility for a particular subject area to gather and share information about what is taking place at each school, share best practices, examine student work and identify professional development which is relevant and valuable to the promotion of district teaching and learning objectives as it applies to the teaching of a subject area.

Definition of Committees (cont.)

<i>Curriculum Writing Teams</i>	
<i>Purpose</i>	Grade or School Based Working Groups w/ the Specific Task of Writing Curriculum
<i>Duration</i>	Temporary as Needed
<i>Make-Up</i>	Curriculum Leaders, Curriculum Specialists, Classroom Teachers, and Special Education teachers with responsibilities to the subject or grade level. Team facilitator identified by the group.
<i>PDPS/Credits</i>	Awarded to teachers based on hours met and outside work.
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form when a need to write or rewrite curriculum is identified by the Curriculum Council. • Proposals are made to the Professional Standards Committee for a curriculum writing workshop by the appropriate Curriculum Leader, Curriculum Specialist, Building Leader, and/or Director of Academic Services on a semester basis.

<i>Task Forces</i>	
<i>Purpose</i>	Action Research Teams: Investigate a specific issue or initiative
<i>Duration</i>	Temporary as Needed
<i>Make-Up</i>	Determined by the task assigned
<i>PDPS/Credits</i>	Awarded to teachers based on hours met and outside work.
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form when a need research a topic in depth and formulate and action plan is identified by the Curriculum Leaders, Building Leaders, and/or Director of Academic Services

Curriculum Review Cycle	
Phase I Evaluation	<p>In Phase I curriculum is evaluated for currency, relevancy and alignment with state and national frameworks. Furthermore instructional practices are reviewed for success in achieving stated goals and objectives. Data (student work, surveys, test scores, anecdotal research) will be used to determine if a course needs further revision or rewriting.</p>
Phase II Write/Revise	<p>In Phase II of the Curriculum Review cycle grade level curricula and courses are rewritten or revised based in accordance with state frameworks, national trends and current best practice. Curriculum is written by “Curriculum Writing Teams” and reviewed by the subject area curriculum councils. During this time necessary materials are identified, piloted and acquired in preparation for Phase III.</p>
Phase III Implementation	<p>In Phase III of the Curriculum Review cycle new or revised curriculum is implemented district- and/or school-wide. Curriculum will be implemented for two years before it re-enters Phase I.</p>

Role of Curriculum Councils in the Review Cycle	
Phase I Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review Scope & Sequence ➤ Check alignment with state and local standards ➤ Review recommendations from professional organizations ➤ Make recommendations for change (example: change in scope & sequence; re-alignment with state or national standards; development of local standards or benchmarks to meet identified areas of weakness; develop standards or benchmarks to meet district initiatives; develop standards or benchmarks to meet local learning objectives not met by the standards; identify course or grade level curricula for revision) ➤ Develop a formal assessment tools. ➤ Conduct the Formal Assessment of curricula re-entering Phase I. ➤ Report findings of Formal Assessments.
Phase II Write/Revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Oversee the Subject Area Implementation Plan. ➤ Oversee the Curriculum Writing Teams. Curriculum Writing Team leaders will report progress to the Council ➤ Review documents submitted by Curriculum Writing Team Leaders to ensure individual course/grade level curriculum integration into K-12 scope and sequence ➤ Review documents submitted by Curriculum Writing Team Leaders to ensure individual course/grade level curriculum and alignment with district goals. ➤ Develop an Evaluation tool for Pilots and Review Instructional Materials (texts, software, ancillaries, technology etc.).
Phase III Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitoring the Implementation of Curriculum Guides. ➤ Conduct informal assessments and make suggestions for modifications and Professional Development. ➤ Develop a formal assessment tool for curricula entering in Phase I the following year.

Role of Writing Teams Review Cycle	
Phase I Evaluation	NA
Phase II Write/Revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a mission statement and goals ➤ Establish - What do we want students to know and be able to do as a result of the course of study or grade level curriculum. ➤ Align with curriculum standards ➤ Plan common assessments and set achievement benchmarks ➤ Plan the approach – develop a general curriculum guide consistent with sensitive to active learning, MI theory and differentiate instruction that identifies instructional strategies and common learning experiences (ex. Performance tasks, simulations, written assessments etc.) ➤ Identify modifications for special needs students. ➤ Identify Instructional Materials needed (texts, software, ancillaries, technology etc.)
Phase III Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop specialized units of study if determined necessary by the Curriculum Council.

5 Year Curriculum Review Plan 2011-2016

Role of Academic Services during Review Cycle	
Phase I Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Assist Curriculum Leaders in all curriculum activities➤ Inform leaders about changes from state and federal mandates➤ Create opportunities for professional development
Phase II Write/Revise	<p>Assist curriculum leaders in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Oversight of the Subject Area Implementation Plan.➤ Oversight of the Curriculum Writing Teams. Curriculum Writing Team leaders will report progress to the Council➤ Review of the documents submitted by Curriculum Writing Team Leaders to ensure individual course/grade level curriculum integration into K-12 scope and sequence➤ Review of the documents submitted by Curriculum Writing Team Leaders to ensure individual course/grade level curriculum and alignment with district goals.➤ Development of an Evaluation tool for Pilots and Review Instructional Materials (texts, software, ancillaries, technology etc.).
Phase III Implementation	<p>Assist curriculum leaders in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Monitoring the Implementation of Curriculum Guides.➤ Conduct informal assessments and make suggestions for modifications and Professional Development.➤ Develop a formal assessment tool for curricula entering in Phase I the following year.