



**FOREST LAKE AREA SCHOOLS
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025**

October 5, 2012

AGENDA ITEM: 10.1

**TOPIC: FIRST READING OF PROPOSAL TO ADJUST
CURRICULUM REVIEW STRUCTURE**

BACKGROUND: The current Curriculum Review and Development Cycle is a five-year process incorporating different phases of curriculum review and development each year. This review process has been integral to conversation around best instructional practice and gains in student achievement over the past 12 years. The process is in need of updating and modification based on the needs of the 14 content area departments that use the process as well as reductions in the curriculum department over the past three years.

PROCESS: The current Curriculum Review and Development Cycle includes conversation and work around how district curricula align with the Minnesota Academic Standards and/or national standards for each content area, as well as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Departments have engaged in refining course offerings across the K-12 spectrum, analyzing data, and recommending professional development to improve instruction. Inclusion, diversity, multiculturalism, gender fairness and technology integration are also assessed during the cycle. As the teachers and administrators work throughout the process, feedback is sought from the Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Committee.

During the 2011-12 school year, the curriculum department has engaged a variety of teachers in the exploration of a curriculum mapping tool made available to us through our involvement with EMID. The Atlas Mapping Tool, part of Rubicon International, is a web-based warehouse that allows us to map curriculum in all content areas, along with providing curriculum transparency and collaboration for teachers across the district. It also provides the opportunity to analyze intended and taught curriculum across a department and at multiple sites. The teachers involved in the exploration to date have seen the power of the tools available for further analysis of vertical and horizontal alignment, student achievement gains, and alignment of standards. As we continue forward with the use of Rubicon Atlas, curriculum review teams will meet in different K-12

configurations which may also provide the opportunity for cross building/course/grade-level PLT discussions at a variety of levels. A new schedule for curriculum review will be created to include all 14 departments in modified rotations based on the amount of time necessary for mapping purposes. We will also work to see how building level PLTs and professional development days can be utilized to provide more opportunities for the work and discussion of the mapping tool and process.

Due to reductions in staffing in the curriculum department there is need for a change in the sequence and purpose of the review process and meetings. Adjustments to the number of departments formally engaged with the process during one year is needed due to the amount of administrative and curriculum support/leadership available for those meetings. With ongoing discussion necessary around the MN Academic Standards and Assessments, Reading/Literacy, Mathematics, and Science review teams need to meet multiple times annually. Those are large teams and the work to maintain alignment with standards and assessments is continually under review. When other teams are added to the process, the number of days devoted to actual Curriculum Review meetings could number in excess of 30. That count does not include the number of days spent in preparation or follow-up for the work of each committee. It has become increasingly difficult to meet the administrative and leadership needs around curriculum review unless some change is made in the number of teams included in the process.

We are hopeful that proposed changes in the process will allow the strategic work necessary in curriculum review to continue with a K-12 emphasis in all areas and a more doable structure for administration and teacher leaders.

RECOMMENDATION: First reading of the proposal to adjust the curriculum review structure and process.