



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent
District 97 Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Helen Wei, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer

RE: **K-8 Written Curriculum/IB Units Update**

DATE: March 14, 2017

Type of Report: Informational

Purpose of the Report: The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Education with an update on the K-8 Written Curriculum/IB Units.

Introduction

The District 97 vision is to **create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive, and focused on the whole child**. Because we would like all students to have similar experiences as they progress through the district, we need a consistent curriculum that will give students equitable access to the curriculum. In most recent years, District 97 has lacked a consistent, standards-aligned written curriculum, leading us to this year’s work in developing the K-8 written curriculum.

Our K-8 written curriculum work addresses the following district universal goals:

- We support every student to be a critical thinker, ready to contribute to their community
- Every student is challenged and engaged
- Each student is known for who they are & their unique needs are met.
- Students lead their own learning and become lifelong learners.

What is the Written Curriculum?

Curriculum is defined as the “*what* in teaching--what students learn in school” and “what the learner needs to know, be able to do, and value” (Lalor, 2017). The written curriculum is the district’s ***documented and communicated system*** of delivery for instruction and of what students will be able to learn and do, and may include a number of resources, documents, guidance, and a framework.

Below are terms often referenced when talking about the written curriculum:

Term	Description	Examples
Curriculum	The high-quality delivery system for ensuring that all students achieve the desired end--the attainment of their designated grade- or course-specific standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a process/system, not one specific document(s).
Unit of Study/ Module	A series of specific lessons, learning experiences, and related assessments based on designated standards for a topical, skills-based, or thematic focus that may last anywhere from 2-6 weeks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IB units• K-5 ELA Units (Written Curriculum)• Eureka Math modules

<p>Standards</p>	<p>The Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) define what all students in all Illinois public schools should know and be able to do in the seven core areas as a result of their elementary and secondary schooling. The ILS for Math and ELA are based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Illinois Learning Standards (e.g. Math, ELA, Science) ● Common Core Standards
<p>Curricular Resource</p>	<p>Textbooks, trade books, commercially produced programs used by teachers and students in the curriculum delivery process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eureka Math Teacher Guides and resources ● Writing Units of Study ● FOSS Science Kits

K-5 Written Curriculum

K-5 English Language Arts

Beginning in June 2016, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 has partnered with Learner-Centered Initiatives, Ltd. (LCI) to design the K-5 ELA written curriculum. Last summer, LCI released drafts of six ELA units for each grade level, using the Writing Units of Study as a core curricular resource. These drafts are currently available to K-5 teachers, with the understanding that revisions have been taking place during the school year, to customize and tailor the units to our district’s needs and values. A committee of K-5 teachers was selected to work with Angela Lalor of LCI to guide the revision process.

The K-5 ELA unit plans are designed to provide an overarching, big picture of the unit, which includes an essential question, reading/writing/speaking/listening skills to guide instruction, standards taught and assessed, as well as formative, summative, and performance assessments. Drawing from the core curricular resources of *Writing Units of Study*, *Reading Units of Study*, and the K-5 ELA Resource Guides, these units also incorporate the Illinois Learning Standards in Science and Social Studies into literacy instruction. Additionally, these units include texts that are diverse and culturally relevant to our students.

In our planning meetings this year, the scope of the work of the K-5 ELA Written Curriculum Team has included:

- using the *Writing Units of Study* and *Reading Units of Study* as our core curricular resources for literacy instruction to help make decisions about other parts of the curriculum
- analyzing the units and resources to determine the emphasis and placement of standards throughout the school year

- examining and selecting texts to ensure cultural relevance to our students
- selecting existing texts from our K-5 ELA Resource Guides to be used to address specific skills and standards

Below is an example of a revised unit description, in which you will see the unit title, essential question, big idea, and general description:

The unit, **Where and How We Live**, is organized around the essential question, *does where and when we live matter?* As a result of the unit, students understand that people have experienced hard times as a result of geographic, economic and social reasons. During the unit, students read a variety of literature and informational text about different groups who have experienced hardship because of where they lived and when they lived. These groups could include

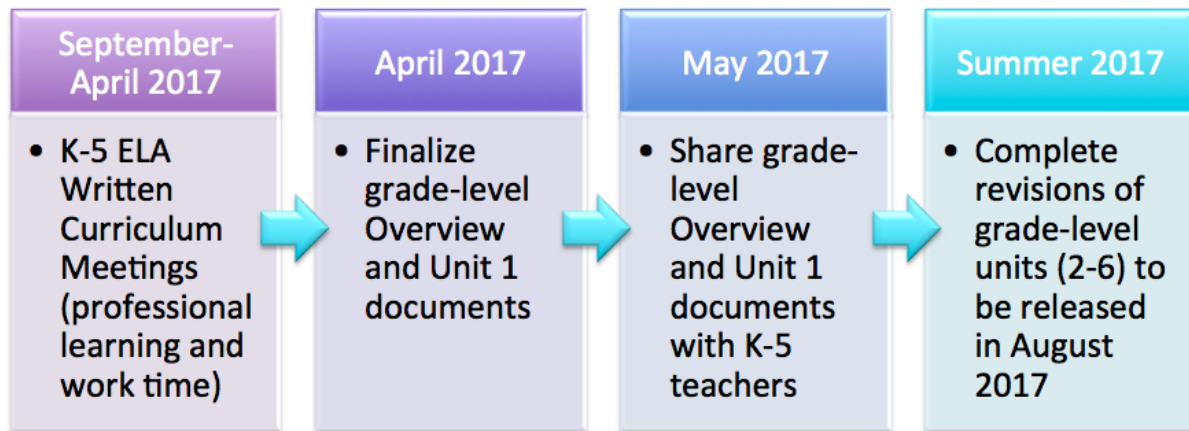
- *African experience*
- *Native American experience*
- *African –American experience*
- *Jewish experience*
- *Hispanic experience*
- *Mid-eastern experience*
- *Asian American experience*

Students use their understanding of how people were impacted economically, socially, or emotionally by the time and place in which they lived. Students work in small groups to research and produce a news report that illustrates how these elements impacted the lives of these people, the lessons that can be learned as a result and what actions can be taken to help people with similar needs today.

Our final meeting as the K-5 ELA Written Curriculum Team will take place at the end of April, at which we will finalize each grade level’s Overview of the Units, as well as each grade level’s Unit 1, in preparation for release to K-5 teachers before the end of the school year. During the summer, LCI will finalize Units 2-6 for each grade level, which will then be released to teachers.

Below is the timeline for the development of the K-5 ELA Written Curriculum:

Timeline for K-5 ELA Written Curriculum Development



K-5 Math

The K-5 Math Written Curriculum Team was selected in the spring of 2016 and began work during the summer of 2016, meeting in grade levels to work with our UIC math consultant, Margie Pligge. During these math planning meetings, teacher teams have developed Trimester Resource Guides for each grade level, incorporating resources from Eureka Math, such as focus standards, problem sets and homework, exit tickets, assessments, and pacing recommendations. In addition, teachers have included additional interactive activities that round out a well-balanced math instructional program, such as number talks, math games, and MARS tasks (formative assessment performance tasks aligned to the Common Core mathematical practices).

In December 2016, a survey was sent to teachers to gather their feedback on the Trimester 1 Resource Guides, for the purpose of helping to guide our continued written curriculum work and ongoing support. Using the teacher feedback gathered, teachers on the K-5 Math Written Curriculum Team adjusted their work to address teacher needs and requests. For example, some teachers asked for more math games to be included in order to create more interactive learning experiences, and some teachers had questions about pacing.

Below is an example of the grade-level internal websites that have been created to house all our resources that make up our math written curriculum, organized in an accessible way for D97 teachers:

Module 1

Module 1: Place Value, Rounding, and Algorithms for Addition and Subtraction

Teaching

Module 1 Lesson Slides
Module 1 TE
Module 1 Student Book
Module 1 Additional Materials
Module 1 MARS Tasks
Module 1 Number Talks Slides
Module 1 Review Slides
Module 1 Math Games Slides
Tape Diagrams for + and - Slides
Kids Intro to MARS Tasks Slides

Assessing

Preassessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module 1 Pretest Module 1 Pretest Answer Key
Formative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic A Check-in Topic B Check-in Topic C Check-in Topic D Check-in
Mid-Module
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Guide Study Guide Answer Key Mid-Module Test Test Answer Key Rubric
Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Guide Study Guide Answer Key Summative Test

Helping Parents

Parent Weebly
Eureka Math Parent Tip Sheet
Parent Handbook
Eureka Homework Helper

The K-5 Math Written Curriculum Team will continue to meet in grade-level planning meetings through May 2017, in order to complete the written curriculum. Recognizing that curriculum work is an ongoing process, the team would like to continue to meet over the summer and/or next year to revise our resource guides based on our implementation experience from this year, as funding allows.

6-8 Written Curriculum/IB Units

During the course of the school year, the middle school departments have been meeting under the teacher leadership of our department chairs and IB Coordinators to develop their IB unit plans, during department meetings (on average, twice per month), common department meeting times, and on Teacher Institute Days.

Some departments, such as Science, Language A, and Math, have had the additional support of consultants who have been meeting with departments to help develop their common summative assessments and IB unit plans, as well as ensure alignment to the Illinois Learning Standards. Additionally, the Language B and Math departments have had IB consultants facilitate a workshop on the January Institute Day to deepen their knowledge of IB in their content areas.

Below is an example of a portion of the IB Unit Plan Template:

Teacher(s)	J. Colucci, L. Pearson, K. O'Keefe, S. Hill, J. Williams, P. Gaffney, C. Borah, R. Youngberg	Subject group and discipline	Language A
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Unit title	Perspectives	MYP year	1	Unit duration	6 Weeks
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Inquiry: Establishing the purpose of the unit

Key concept (1)	Related concepts (2-3)	Global context
Perspective	Point of view (response) Character Purpose Setting	Personal & Cultural Expression Exploration: Philosophies and Ways of Life

Statement of inquiry - 1 Key concept + 2 related concepts + exploration

Perspective drives **characters'** (individual) **responses** and **purposes** in order to shape **philosophies and ways of life**.
perspective = how you see the world based on values, beliefs, attitudes, and experiences
POV = the type of narration:
 1st: Story is told from the point of view of a character in the story, using 1st person pronouns such as I, me, we, our. Reader see events from character's point of view. 2nd: The author is speaking to the reader. "You" and commands are used. 3rd: A narrator is telling the story. Readers are able to know the thoughts of one of the characters (limited), several or all of the characters (omniscient).

The IB Unit Plans include the following components:

- Unit title
- Statement of inquiry
- Key, related, and global concepts
- Objectives
- Description of the common summative assessment(s) and alignment to the statement of inquiry
- Formative assessments leading to the summative assessment
- IB Criterion rubrics
- Reflections for continued improvement (prior to, during, and following implementation)

We have set benchmark deadlines for departments to complete their unit plans and common summative assessments, with the goal of full implementation next year in 2017-2018. Thus far, our middle school departments have completed the following total number of units across the three grade levels:

Department	Number of units completed
Language A	10
Language B	12

Math	10
Science	6
Humanities	10
Design	1
Band/Orchestra	2
Choral Music	4
Speech/Drama/Debate	2
Visual Arts	6
Physical Education/ Health	11

The total number of units for each department is dependent on the content area and delivery model. As mentioned above, unit plans are on track to be completed for full implementation for the next school year, 2017-2018, in all three trimesters.

Conclusion

Our goal for next year is to be able to fully implement our written curriculum in Math and ELA in grades K-5, and in all departments in grades 6-8. Recognizing that curriculum development is an ongoing process that requires constant revisions and reflection, we will continue to work with teachers to make necessary adjustments as we gain experience in implementation.

References

Glatthorn, Allan A., Carr, Judy F. and Harris, Douglas E. (2001). *Planning and organizing for curriculum renewals*. Retrieved from <<http://www.ascd.org/publications/curriculum-handbook/398/chapters/Thinking-About-Curriculum.aspx>>

Lalor, A. D. (2017). *Ensuring high-quality curriculum: how to design, revise, or adopt curriculum aligned to student success*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Appendix A

Board Questions on IB Program Implementation

- What is the amount of time IB recommends for "Advisory Type" and Social Emotional Learning Type activities (and have we been able to schedule that much time)?

All the aspects of the program are incorporated in a holistic manner. Therefore, advisory or social emotional learning activities should ideally be part of the written curriculum. The IB does not recommend or require a specific amount of time for these type of activities. For example, learning about empathy may be tied into a character study of a novel in Language and Literature unit. The ideal arrangement for social emotional learning is for it to come from the curriculum to make it as authentic as possible.

Other skills that might be taught in an advisory class are the Approaches to Learning skills (ATL skills). ATL skills include: organization, research, and self-management, which are skills that have relevance across the curriculum, These skills are organized throughout the three years to reinforce learning independently and with others. Again, the ideal place to teach these skills is through the implementation of the written curriculum. Advisory supports the work of ATL and social emotional learning that is embedded.

- Are there any scheduling/structure/systems issues that exist that are barriers to either a better IB implementation and/or better best practice for 6-8?

IB requires that students not only have an arts class every year (which they currently do), but that students also should be able to take both types of art--visual and performing--at least once during their time at our middle schools. Meeting this requirement has been a scheduling barrier. This is difficult due to the fact that students commit to one arts form for the three years of middle school.

- How you are measuring the progress and success of the IB rollout in terms of processes (not student outcomes). How many teachers have been trained, at what

grade levels/schools, and how are we providing on-going PD and technical assistance in implementing these curricula? How often are teachers discussing aspects of the implementation, what are our next steps/most thorny current challenges, etc.

There are several ways the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program is being tracked. The IB-published *MYP:Standards and Practices* guide is used by the coordinators and administrators to guide all work related to maintaining our IB designation. There are over 70 practices included, which include but are not limited to the philosophical approach to teaching and learning, the written and taught curriculum, the school-wide approach to meeting the needs of the whole child, and creating a system of professional collaboration. These standards are used to prioritize work and guide actions and decisions and are the same standards IB will assess us on when they evaluate our school in 2020.

The IB Coordinators and Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment collaborate with the department heads to plan professional development for the teachers. Teachers are also sent to professional development provided by the IB organization to build capacity of the IB philosophy and pedagogy. Additionally, overall professional development is guided by a teacher survey given at the end of each school year which rates teacher understanding of the many aspects of the program.

The other major metric is what you see above related to unit completion. We have set benchmark deadlines for unit completion. Next year, all common units and summative assessments will be implemented for all three trimesters.

By the end of first trimester of the 2017-2018, school year all units will be written in entirety including a statement of inquiry (thematic focus), common summative assessments, and formative learning experiences. This means we will be able to share this information with the community.