

# Baltimore County Public Schools Curriculum Management Plan

## Foreword

The students in our schools today naturally anticipate what lies ahead for them, whether it is in tomorrow's classroom lesson, or as they move from one grade to another, or as they look forward to success in college, careers, and life. To prepare our young people to meet the expectations of tomorrow and beyond, we must always be equally forward-thinking, never complacent.

Seven years ago, Baltimore County Public Schools established the *Blueprint for Progress* as the foundational document for the school system. It calls on us to provide a high-quality education to all students in a dynamic world where expectations and accountability continue to rise.

It was in the spirit of the *Blueprint*, in the spirit of reaching beyond what some might say is attainable, that we contracted with Phi Delta Kappa to conduct a comprehensive curriculum management audit of our school system. Like other assessments our school system has conducted in the past, it has helped us identify opportunities to grow stronger and be more effective in areas that, when addressed strategically and with purpose, will yield the greatest performance improvement.

This Curriculum Management Plan responds to many findings of the curriculum management audit and sets forth a strategy for improving all areas that support delivery of quality instruction. It is our duty to implement this plan consistently and effectively in order to reach the next level of performance as a school system and to prepare our children to reach higher levels of academic achievement. As our students continually anticipate what comes next, we must be accountable to them and align our thinking, our plans, and our actions toward their future success.

Dr. Joe A. Hairston  
Superintendent  
June 2007

Baltimore County Public Schools  
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Curriculum Management Plan



June 12, 2007

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Curriculum Management Plan</b>	
Part I: Vision	1
Part II: Curriculum Development	6
Part III: Curriculum, Implementation and Support	11
Part IV: Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation	16
<b>Additional Resources</b>	
Communication Guidelines	20
Glossary	22
References	26

# BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT PLAN

## PART I: VISION

### **PURPOSE OF THE CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This Curriculum Management Plan is a systemic document that establishes procedures for the design, delivery, and evaluation of all curricula. The *Blueprint for Progress* and the *Master Plan* set forth the vision and the philosophy, and serve to outline “the goals, processes, and positions involved in designing, developing, evaluating, and revising quality curriculum documents” (*Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Curriculum Management Audit*, p. 86). More specifically, it assigns roles, responsibilities, and accountability for the design and implementation of the curriculum. It includes a comprehensive professional development plan aligned to curriculum design and delivery based upon national, state, and local curriculum standards. The plan also presents procedures and specifications for monitoring and evaluating curriculum design, delivery, and effectiveness.

### **FIRST PRINCIPLES**

The vision of the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is to produce graduates who have the content knowledge, skills, and attitudes to reach their potential as responsible, productive citizens and to be successful in college and the work place. This Curriculum Management Plan will provide for instruction at the highest levels and will produce increased student performance based on established, measurable standards. Designed to ensure collaboration, consistency, and continuous review, this Curriculum Management Plan provides direction for everyone involved in teaching and learning in Baltimore County Public Schools. Implementation of all components of this Curriculum Management Plan will narrow achievement gaps and ensure the success of *all* students.

### ***Blueprint for Progress***

This Curriculum Management Plan is founded on the Baltimore County Public Schools’ *Blueprint for Progress*, which provides our school community with the precepts and beliefs that guide all efforts to educate every child in our school system. . .

### **VISION**

*Baltimore County Public Schools’ graduates will have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to reach their potential as responsible, productive citizens in a global economy and multicultural society.*

## MISSION

*The Baltimore County Public Schools' mission is to provide a quality education that develops the content knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable all students to reach their maximum potential as responsible, life-long learners and productive citizens.*

## GOALS

- *To improve achievement for all students*
- *To maintain a safe and orderly learning environment in every school*
- *To use resources effectively and efficiently*

## BELIEF STATEMENTS

- *We believe that all students will learn and achieve.*
- *We believe that improved student achievement requires families and communities to be partners in the educational process.*
- *We believe that increased student achievement requires families to be responsible and accountable for their children's education.*
- *We believe that all schools will demonstrate adequate yearly progress.*
- *We believe in respecting the dignity and worth of every individual.*
- *We believe that a quality education requires:*
  - *An effective, qualified teacher in every classroom*
  - *An effective, qualified principal focused on instruction in every school*
  - *A challenging systemic curriculum*
  - *A results-oriented, data-driven focus on continuous growth*
  - *An assessment program focused on the measurement of student growth*
  - *Shared accountability among teachers, principals, and central office personnel*
  - *Early intervention for young children*
- *We believe that every employee must model ethical behavior, exhibit a strong work ethic, and perform at high levels.*
- *We believe that all Baltimore County Public Schools' departments and offices must demonstrate continuous improvement.*

## INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Quality curricular control requires: (1) a rigorous *written* curriculum, in clear and consistent form, for application by teachers in classrooms or related instructional settings, (2) a rigorous *taught* curriculum that is shaped by, and interactive with, the written one, and (3) a rigorous *assessed* curriculum that is linked to both the taught and written curricula, and that includes the tasks, concepts, and skills for student learning. Technology, used for instruction, assessment, management, and the support of teaching and learning, is also an integral component.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following guiding principles provide Baltimore County Public Schools with a foundation for enabling stakeholders to promote student achievement through strict alignment of the written, taught, and assessed curriculum:

### **Curriculum Management Principles (Written Curriculum)**

- BCPS Board of Education policy ensures the development of curricula that are aligned to and exceed minimum state regulations and standards.
- A rigorous core curriculum promotes active student engagement and meets the diverse learning needs of all students.
- The curriculum provides multiple opportunities for all students to achieve core objectives and includes a variety of modifications and differentiation strategies.
- A comprehensive professional development plan supports curriculum design, implementation, assessment, and the evaluation process.
- Curriculum development is ongoing and cyclical, including management, development, implementation, assessment, evaluation, monitoring, and revision.
- The curriculum is written in a consistent format and is accessible to all stakeholders, reflecting best practices and research-based strategies.
- The curriculum aligns vertically (PreK-12) and horizontally (within grade levels), supporting the systemwide goal of creating a college and work-force ready culture.

### **Instructional Management Principles (Taught Curriculum)**

- Effective instruction is the shared responsibility of the entire educational community.
- Classroom instruction (the taught curriculum) includes, but is not limited to, all skills and content presented in the written curriculum as prescribed by national, state, and local standards.
- Teachers implement the written curriculum (the “what”) with fidelity, while effectively differentiating instruction (the “how”) to meet the needs of all students.
- Instructional resources, aligned with the curriculum, are appropriate, available, and consistently utilized during instruction.
- All BCPS offices and schools share responsibility for planning, developing, and implementing high quality professional development that aligns with curriculum and supports instructional planning and delivery.

### **Assessment Management Principles (Assessed Curriculum)**

Assessment is an integral component of any successful curriculum. A comprehensive assessment plan fosters sound instructional decision making and provides a vehicle for the analysis and communication of student achievement results. The purpose of the assessment plan is to:

- Guide instruction
- Guide learning

- Guide the school system in the improvement of both the design and delivery of the curriculum, the use of support services, and professional development
- Provide valid, reliable, and timely information to all stakeholders regarding student achievement and the overall effectiveness of the curriculum

### **NON-NEGOTIABLE INSTRUCTIONAL ELEMENTS**

The following instructional elements are required for the promotion of student achievement:

- Research-based best practices and methodologies
- Evident, systemwide support for differentiated instruction (e.g. enrichment, reteaching, and acceleration to account for differences in learning styles, student affect, cultural differences)
- Instructional taxonomies to ensure increased levels of sophistication and rigor
- Established priorities for use of instructional time
- Strategies for integration across disciplines and grades
- Numerous and varied opportunities for students to see practical applications for the content and skills being taught
- Curricular back mapping of skills, beginning with a specific learning outcome in mind
- College, career, and job preparedness to promote life-long learning
- Frequent, constructive monitoring of learning and teaching

### **CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

A key component of the BCPS Curriculum Management Plan will be the creation of a standing Curriculum Management Committee. This committee will provide ongoing guidance and support in the design, delivery, review, and evaluation of the Curriculum Management Plan.

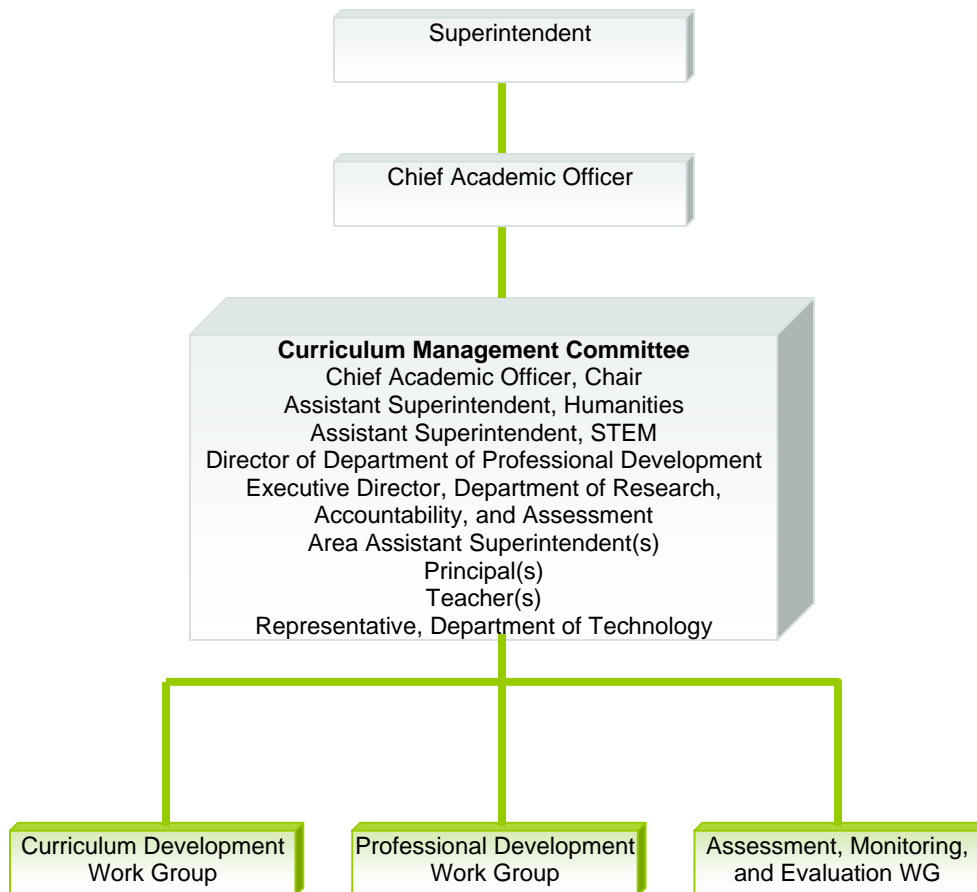
The Chief Academic Officer will appoint the members of the Curriculum Management Committee. Membership will include:

- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction – Humanities
- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- Director of the Department of Professional Development
- Executive Director of the Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment
- Area Assistant Superintendents
- School Principals
- Teachers
- Representation from the Department of Technology

Adequate funding for human and material resources is crucial for ensuring effective implementation of the Curriculum Management Plan. The Curriculum Management Committee will be responsible for making timely recommendations to the superintendent regarding budgetary priorities as these relate to the audit findings. The committee will also assume responsibility for the development of a three- to five-year plan to establish timelines to implement the Curriculum Management Plan.

**WORK GROUPS**

In addition to the creation of a Curriculum Management Committee, the Chief Academic Officer will assign membership in different work groups. These groups will include: 1) Curriculum Development, 2) Professional Development, and 3) Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation. Work groups are designed to serve in an advisory capacity to the Curriculum Management Committee. The composition and major responsibilities of these work groups will be described in Parts II, III, and IV of the Curriculum Management Plan.



## **PART II: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

The Curriculum Management Plan provides systematic direction and consistency for the design, delivery, and evaluation of the written, taught, and assessed curriculum of Baltimore County Public Schools. The plan specifically addresses the systemwide processes that BCPS will employ to develop and refine all curricula based on the goals outlined in the *Blueprint for Progress*, and the findings and recommendations in the *PDK Curriculum Management Audit*.

This section focuses on the following aspects of the BCPS Curriculum Management Plan:

- The Curriculum Development Work Group
- The BCPS Curriculum Frameworks
- Curriculum Guides
- Prioritizing the Development and Revision of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks
- Reviewing the Quality and Consistency of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks

### **THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP**

The Chief Academic Officer will assign members to the Curriculum Development Work Group. The group will include area assistant superintendent(s); school-based administrators; teachers; representatives from the Departments of Humanities; STEM; Professional Development; Research, Accountability, and Assessment; and Human Resources; and the Offices of Equity and Assurance and Technology. The Curriculum Development Work Group will:

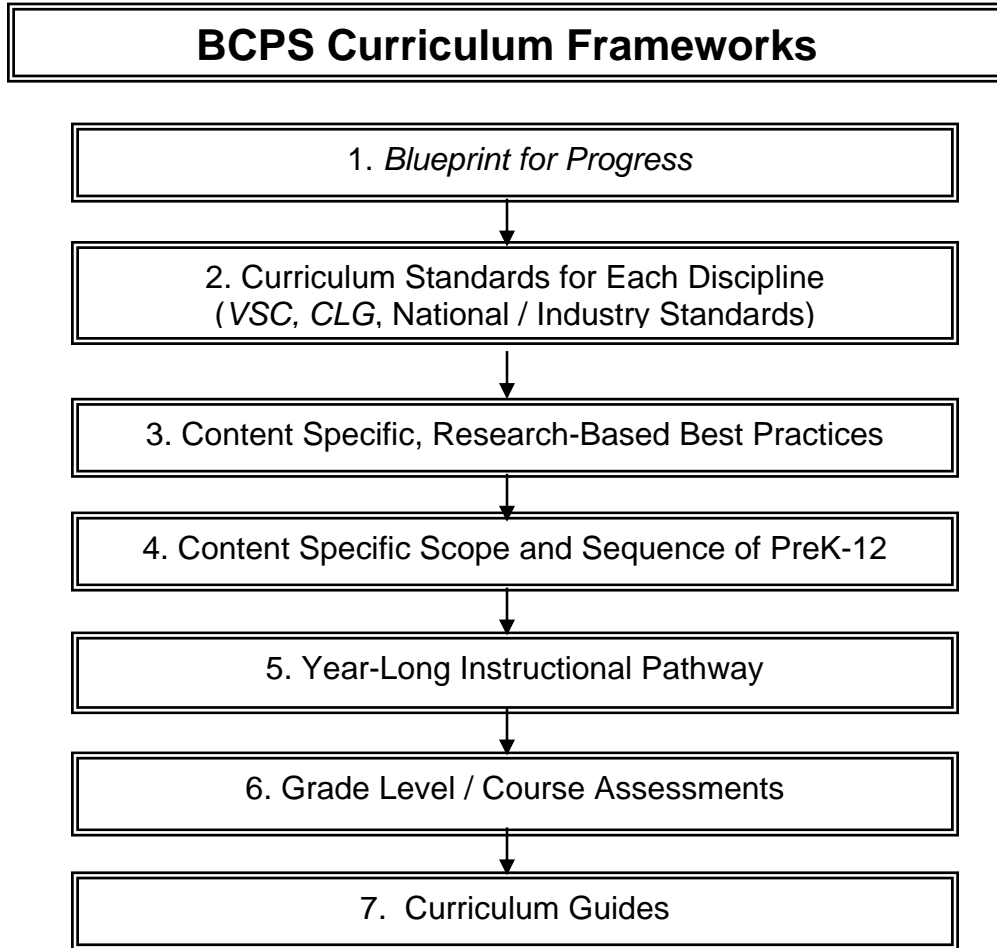
- Recommend policies and rules that relate to curriculum development
- Identify systemwide curriculum development goals and priorities related to student achievement
- Provide leadership in the development and monitoring of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks

## **THE BCPS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS**

The foundation for all exemplary curriculum work begins with quality curriculum frameworks, applied to the development of every course and content area. The frameworks set instructional standards at the highest level and exceed the foundational basis outlined in the Maryland *Voluntary State Curriculum* and the *Core Learning Goals*.

The BCPS Curriculum Frameworks, shown on the following page, will include the following:

1. The ***Blueprint for Progress*** – consideration of and mapping to the related elements of the *Blueprint for Progress*.
2. **Curriculum Standards for Each Discipline** comprised of national, state, and local standards, as well as applicable industry standards.
3. **Content-Specific, Research-Based Best Practices** that authenticate the appropriateness of the methodologies and content in subsequent sections.
4. A complete **Content-Specific Scope and Sequence of Prekindergarten to Grade 12** instructional objectives that identify the level of cognitive demand and assist teachers in targeting the points at which specific skills and strategies are introduced, reinforced, and mastered.
5. A **Year-Long Instructional Pathway** that includes an overview of what students should know and be able to do in each content area by the end of each grade level or course.
6. A variety of **Grade Level Course Assessments** to provide teachers with information that guides, informs, and improves instruction and student achievement.
7. **Curriculum Guides**, explained in detail in the following section.



### **CURRICULUM GUIDES**

Once the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks are in place, curriculum writers will proceed with the development or revision of curriculum guides according to a prioritized order. Sample exemplar curriculum guides will be provided to curriculum writers to guide the development of high quality BCPS curriculum guides. BCPS guides will follow a common curriculum format that will be adopted and approved by the Curriculum Management Committee. In addition, they will:

1. Provide a connection to national, state, and local standards
2. Identify the objectives to be covered, clarifying the rigor of the objectives with verbs that describe the cognitive processes students must demonstrate
3. Identify appropriate instructional materials and resources (e.g. texts, technology, visuals, manipulatives, equipment) to support each objective
4. Provide sample assessment items using a variety of item formats that contextualize instruction in terms of high stakes and real-world problem solving
5. Provide a variety of performance-based methods of assessing students' learning (e.g. re-enactments, presentations, projects, labs, panel discussions, internships, plays)
6. Include explicit and systematic lessons

7. Include differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners
8. Provide a variety of instructional delivery models (whole group, small group, cooperative learning groups, partner work, independent learning)
9. Outline a pacing schedule for instruction
10. Include activities that reinforce and connect skills and strategies learned in other content areas
11. Include home-school connections and strategies for reinforcing instruction at home

### **PRIORITIZING THE DEVELOPING AND REVISING OF THE BCPS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS**

Curriculum is intended to prepare students for the future; therefore, the development and revision of content specific curricular frameworks for BCPS will be an ongoing process inextricably bound to educational and societal changes.

The following will be considered for prioritizing the development and revision of content specific curriculum frameworks for BCPS:

- What information do student data yield?
- What do qualitative and quantitative data indicate about the effectiveness of the curriculum guide?
- Does the guide support a tested area (MSA, HSA, SAT, AP)?
- Have there been changes in standards (curriculum standards or industry standards), pedagogy, or research since the writing of the current guide?
- Based on the levels of cognitive demand, how rigorous is the existing course? Should the course continue to be offered in BCPS?
- Are the books/resource materials used in this course current and relevant? What are the copyright dates of the books/resource materials used by students to support the curriculum guide? Are the books/resource materials still in print?
- How many students are currently enrolled in the course?
- How many schools offer the course?

### **REVIEWING THE QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY OF THE BCPS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS**

In order to ensure that all BCPS curriculum guides meet standards for quality and consistency, a process will be developed for reviewing the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks in every revised or newly developed curriculum guide. This process will ensure that the aforementioned components will not only exist in the final product but will actually make teaching and learning more effective.

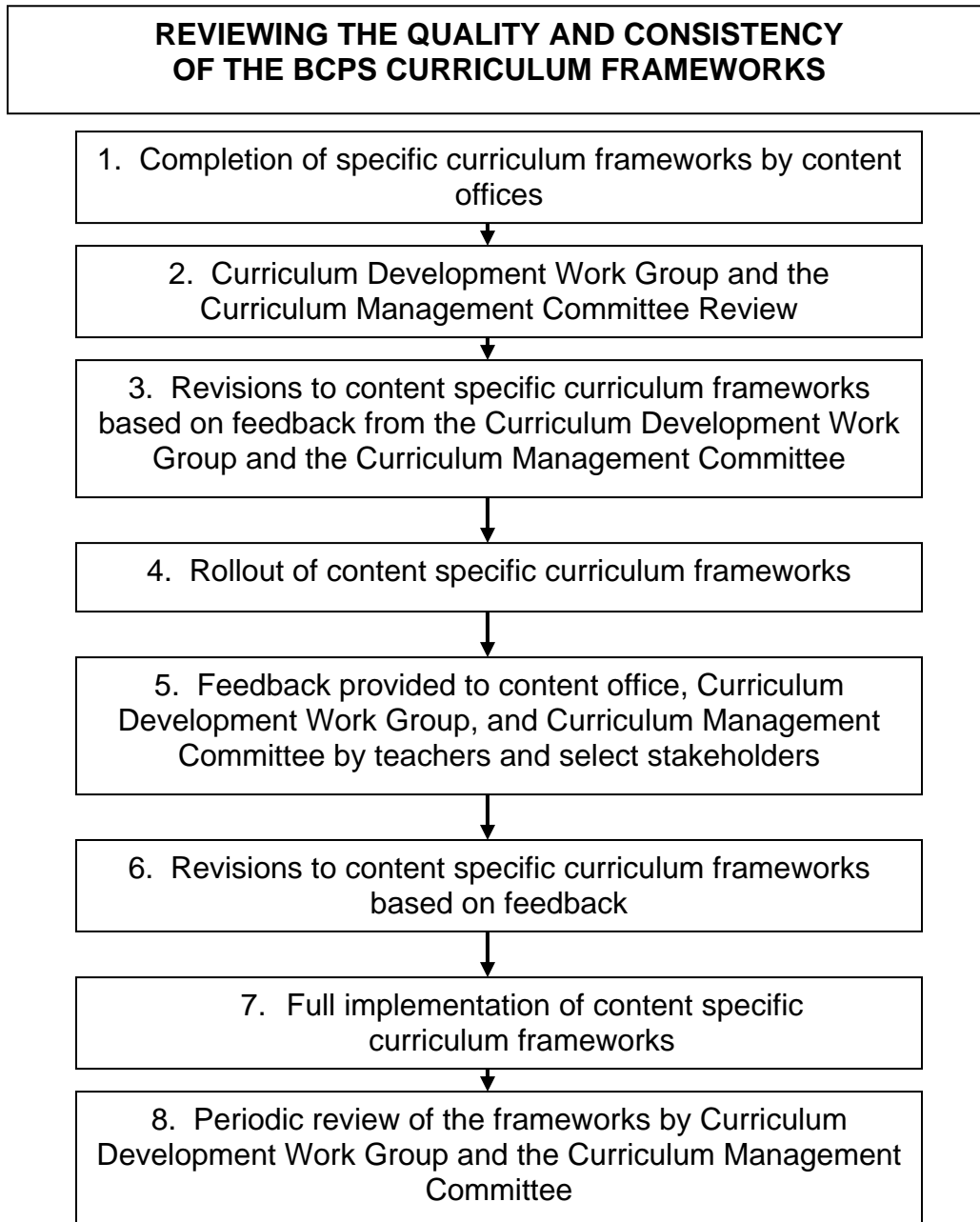
The Curriculum Development Work Group involves the following personnel in reviewing the quality of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks.

- Grade level/content teachers who did not participate in the writing of the curriculum guide
- Personnel from the Division of Curriculum and Instruction
- School-based administrators
- Representatives from the Office of Professional Development

- Representatives from the Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment

The Curriculum Development Work Group will advise the Curriculum Management Committee regarding the consistency and quality of the incorporation of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks in all future curriculum development.

In reviewing the application of the BCPS Curriculum Frameworks, the following steps will guide the process:



## **PART III: CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

A consistent framework for planning, implementation, and support is essential for ensuring high quality professional development. All levels of curricular professional development must be aligned and must support the written, taught, and assessed curriculum; systemwide and school-based initiatives must be mutually supportive to ensure the reinforcement and sustainability of content knowledge, skills, and strategies for each intended audience. BCPS professional development initiatives must be differentiated to meet the diverse needs of adult learners and must include high quality, ongoing training using both text resources and digital technologies (see the graphic at the end of this section).

This section focuses on the following aspects of the BCPS Curriculum Management Plan:

- The Professional Development Work Group
- BCPS Department of Professional Development Roles and Responsibilities
- Professional Development Priorities
- Curriculum Implementation and Support
- Evaluation of BCPS Professional Development Activities and Programs
- Communication

### **THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP**

A Professional Development Work Group, comprised of individuals selected by the Chief Academic Officer will be formed. The group will include area assistant superintendent(s); school-based administrators; teachers; representatives from the Departments of Humanities; STEM; Professional Development; Research, Accountability, and Assessment; and Human Resources; and the Offices of Equity and Assurance and Technology.

The Professional Development Work Group will:

- Recommend policies and rules that relate to professional development
- Identify systemwide professional development goals related to student achievement
- Examine current practices for using student achievement data, curriculum implementation data, data on school climate, and levels of expectations for student learning
- Provide leadership in identifying a research-based Professional Development Plan

## **DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As part of the BCPS Curriculum Management Plan, the BCPS Department of Professional Development, in collaboration with the Curriculum Management Committee and the Professional Development Work Group, will design a research-based Professional Development Plan to serve as the foundation for all professional development initiatives. The Department of Professional Development will ensure that the plan includes guidelines for:

- Developing a uniform structure for the BCPS curricular offices to report their professional development plan for the academic year
- Incorporating the *Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards* in all professional development proposals
- Ensuring stakeholder awareness and support regarding teacher and administrator professional development as integral to student learning and increased student achievement
- Identifying professional development needs
- Providing differentiated professional development opportunities
- Conducting formal induction training for new teachers and new administrators with a focus on the written, taught, and assessed curriculum
- Mentoring and coaching opportunities for teachers and administrators
- Facilitating opportunities for teachers and administrators to exchange ideas and strategies related to best practices
- Collaborating with the Office of Research, Accountability, and Assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development and school improvement initiatives
- Tracking and reporting participation in systemwide professional development and school improvement initiatives
- Tracking and reporting participation in non-curriculum related professional development initiatives
- Creating systems to ensure accountability in all facets of professional development activities

## **DETERMINING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES**

The Professional Development Work Group will serve as a clearinghouse and will provide direction to the Curriculum Management Committee concerning professional development plans related to curriculum implementation and support. The group will coordinate the review and approval of professional development plans submitted by curricular offices. Area assistant superintendents will work collaboratively with the Professional Development Work Group to review the professional development components of School Improvement Plans with respect to audience, delivery methods, resources required, follow-up strategies, evaluation, and timelines.

### **Systemwide Professional Development**

Stakeholders from each BCPS office will determine systemwide professional development needs for specific audiences and will develop a professional development plan. Each office will ensure that professional development:

- Be of high quality, and aligned to goals and indicators in the BCPS *Blueprint for Progress*, the BCPS *Master Plan*, and the Maryland *Voluntary State Curriculum*
- Reflect consideration of professional development needs identified in School Improvement Plans
- Reflect needs related to the introduction of new initiatives and resources by curricular offices

### **School-based Professional Development**

School principals and leadership teams will determine professional development initiatives based on student achievement data and system priorities in their School Improvement Plans. Area assistant superintendents will review and approve all professional development priorities identified in each School Improvement Plan.

Schools will ensure that high quality professional development will be based upon:

- The BCPS *Blueprint for Progress*, BCPS *Master Plan*, and the Maryland *Voluntary State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals*
- *Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards*

## **CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT**

A consistent process to support instructional staff in the delivery of new and existing curricula will be utilized. This process will be established to provide professional development for instructional staff at the introduction, implementation, and institutionalization phases. The Professional Development Work Group and the Curriculum Management Committee will oversee the establishment of this process.

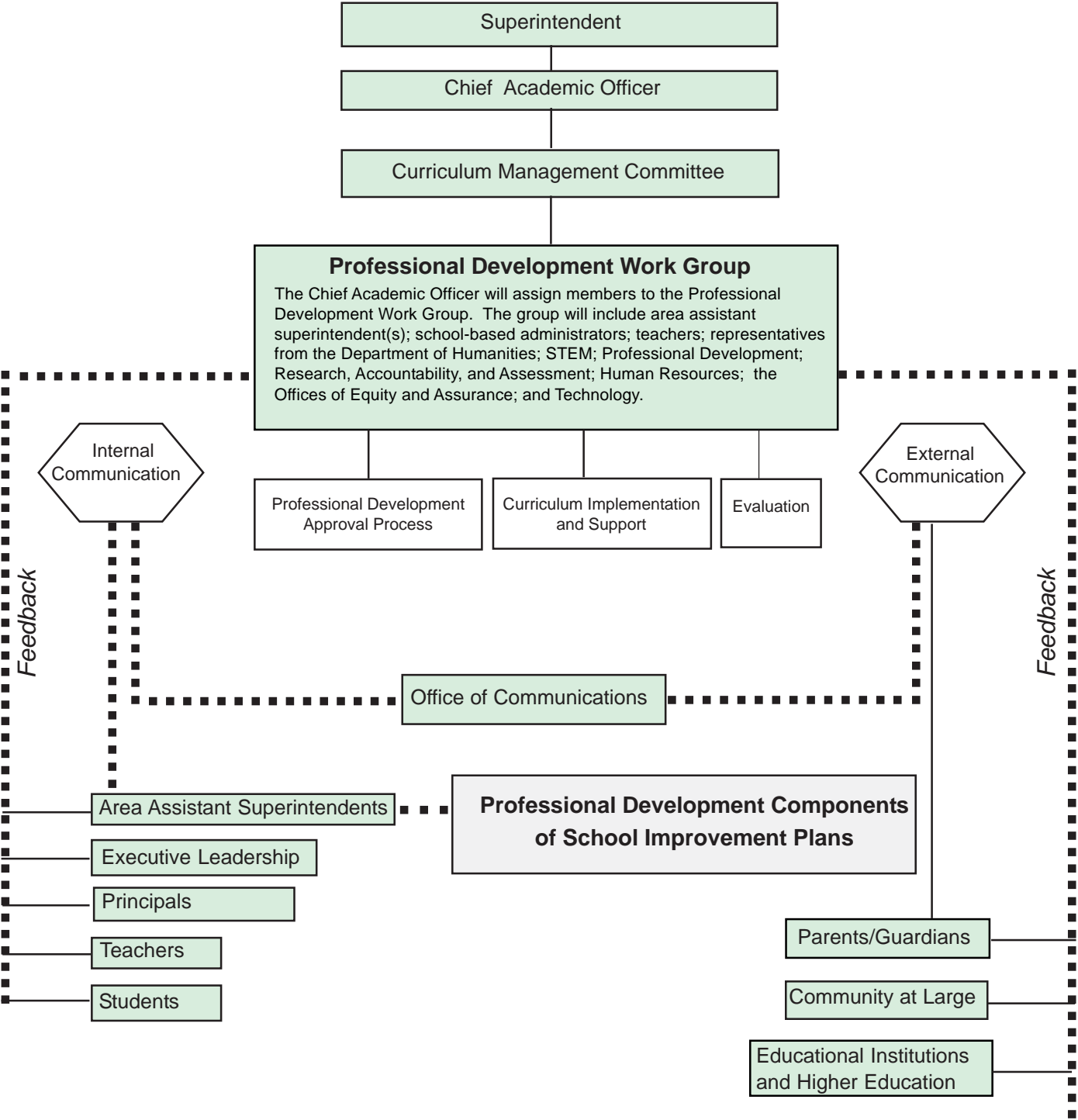
## **EVALUATION OF BCPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development designed to improve student learning will use appropriate tools for measuring effectiveness, including changes in instructional practices and related student achievement. The Curriculum Management Committee and the Professional Development Work Group will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to evaluate all BCPS professional development initiatives.

The Professional Development Work Group will:

- Assess the adequacy of the support and resources provided to participants
- Assess training quality
- Evaluate participants' acquisition and implementation of new knowledge and skills
- Evaluate the impact on instructional practice and student performance

# Professional Development Process



## **PART IV: ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION**

The assessment, monitoring, and evaluation components of the Curriculum Management Plan will enable all Baltimore County Public Schools' stakeholders to engage in a deliberate, thoughtful process of continuous improvement (see the graphic at the end of this section.)

These components include:

- Requirements for implementing a **Comprehensive Assessment Plan**
- Requirements for **Curriculum Implementation Monitoring**
- Expectations for **Curriculum Evaluation**
- Standards for **Analysis and Use of Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Data**

### **THE ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION WORK GROUP**

The Chief Academic Officer will assign members to the Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Work Group. The group will include area assistant superintendent(s); school-based administrators; teachers; representatives from the Departments of Humanities; STEM; Professional Development; Research, Accountability, and Assessment; and Human Resources; and the Offices of Equity and Assurance and Technology.

The Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Work Group will advise the Curriculum Management Committee on matters related to assessment, evaluation, and monitoring, and will specifically be charged with developing and reviewing a Comprehensive Assessment Plan.

### **COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PLAN**

A Comprehensive Assessment Plan will provide direction for all aspects of testing and assessment in the school system. It will include national, state, and county-mandated testing, as well as curriculum-embedded assessments. The Comprehensive Assessment Plan will:

- Set systemwide expectations by:
  - Specifying assessment-related procedures for ongoing needs assessment and stakeholder involvement
  - Establishing criteria for correlating district and state assessments
  - Providing timelines and procedures for review and evaluation of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan
  - Identifying processes for involving stakeholders and for communicating data to them
- Provide standardized requirements for assessment at all levels of the system by:
  - Identifying the multiple purposes and types of assessments
  - Providing matrices of assessment tools, subjects, timelines, etc.

- Requiring controls for bias (e.g. gender, language, disability, race, ethnicity, culture) in assessment development
- Requiring assessment tools and sample questions in all curriculum guides
- Setting standards for quality in curriculum-embedded assessments
- Requiring training for internal audiences (professional development related to assessment and evaluation methods and processes)
- Providing information for parents/guardians and other community members related to assessing school and student progress
- Specifying requirements for storage, security, and handling of assessment documents
- Specifying mandatory state and county meetings
- Incorporate the use of technology to support all aspects of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan, where appropriate

### **CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING**

Research indicates that high quality curriculum, implemented with fidelity, positively impacts student achievement. Determining whether implementation is effective is a necessary first step in determining whether the curriculum itself is likely to lead to improved student outcomes. Consequently, procedures included in the Comprehensive Assessment Plan for monitoring the implementation of the BCPS curriculum will:

- Identify best practices for using classroom observations and student achievement data to monitor curriculum implementation
- Specify area office, content office, professional development staff, principal, assistant principal, department chair, resource teacher, and classroom teacher roles in monitoring processes
- Require the identification of strategies to link degrees of curriculum implementation to student performance results
- Require the development of rubrics and forms for recording evidence of success in curriculum implementation
- Identify district and school-level timelines for monitoring and data reporting
- Provide guidelines for communicating results to stakeholders
- Require the use of technology to assess implementation strategies, as appropriate

### **CURRICULUM EVALUATION**

Effective curriculum evaluation includes specific procedures and timelines for reflecting on and evaluating the quality, scope, standards, and outcomes of the written, taught, and assessed curriculum. The BCPS curriculum should be periodically revised to address new research findings and new state and federal laws or regulations. All curriculum evaluations should be guided by scientifically-based research methods and should:

- Establish quality standards that address current instructional trends and best practices for the written, taught, and assessed curriculum
- Require alignment with national, state, and district performance standards

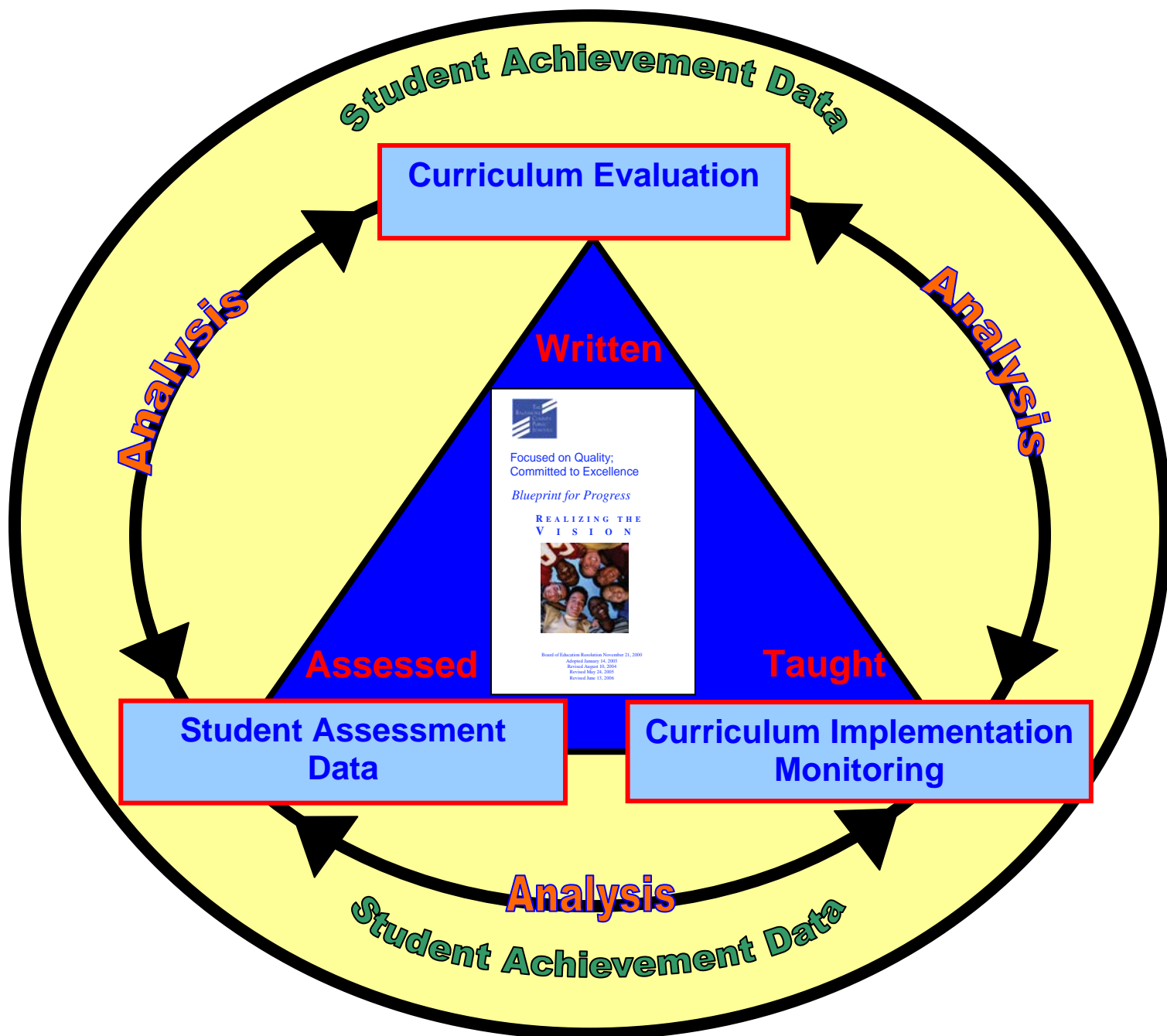
- Require collaborative analysis of student achievement data to determine needs for curriculum review and evaluation
- Establish a timeline for cyclical review and evaluation of the curriculum
- Specify curriculum evaluation procedures that reflect best practices for program evaluation
- Establish procedures to identify the impact of curriculum-related professional development on student achievement
- Provide for the inclusion of school and district leadership, community, and other stakeholders in curriculum review and evaluation processes
- Require communication of review and evaluation processes to staff, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders
- Require the use of technology to support collection and analysis of data, communication, and other processes, where appropriate

## **ANALYSIS AND USE OF ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION OF DATA**

BCPS has developed a data warehouse that makes it possible for system personnel at all levels to access and analyze data to inform decision-making. Establishing standards for the analysis and use of data will ensure that data are collected, stored, and communicated in an accurate, timely, effective, and ethical manner for the purpose of curriculum development and instructional decision-making. Examples of data that are incorporated within the scope of this plan are: student assessment data, curriculum implementation monitoring data, curriculum review and evaluation data, and program evaluation and research results data. The standards developed will:

- Set expectations for using district and school data at all levels to improve student achievement by:
  - Requiring the timely communication of assessment, monitoring, and evaluation results
  - Identifying best practices for using state and county-mandated assessment data, including formative, summative, and curriculum-embedded assessment data, to drive instructional decision-making
  - Requiring specific goals, aligned to the *Blueprint for Progress*, for data reporting
  - Requiring the selection of reporting strategies that are aligned with identified BCPS goals and that effectively communicate the desired information
  - Requiring collaboration among the Division of Curriculum and Instruction offices to identify needs and provide training for staff on using data to drive instruction and support program improvement
- Identify area office, content office, professional development staff, principal, assistant principal, department chair, resource teacher and classroom teacher roles in collecting, analyzing, and communicating data and results
- Establish guidelines for conducting curriculum-related program evaluations
- Require the use of technology for data collection, storage, retrieval, and analysis, where appropriate

## Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Process



## **COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES**

The Curriculum Management Plan will include a communications plan component to inform and celebrate successes realized as the plan unfolds.

### **COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES**

Successful implementation of communications strategies and action steps set forth in the communications plan will meet the following objectives:

- To share with the public (staff, students, stakeholders, community at large, colleagues in public education, other communities) the progress being made as BCPS responds to the PDK Curriculum Management Audit recommendations,
- To engage the public in understanding and supporting the development of and the implementation of the Curriculum Management Plan
- To instill in BCPS staff the understanding of the purpose and basic principles of the Curriculum Management Plan, and then provide the tools (guidelines, talking points, communications tips, etc.) in order to best support excellent customer service to students, parents, and the community at the front-line level of engagement with the public.
- To engage the public in talking and thinking about how their expectations for the successful education of children, as defined in the *Blueprint for Progress*, relate to the successful development of classroom and coursework objectives, the professional training of teachers, the deployment of instructional materials, and opportunities for parent participation so that:
  - The public can better support teachers and principals,
  - Parents and families can better understand and help support teaching and learning objectives with their children,
  - Students and parents can see a clear path to academic growth and advancement among various courses and between grade levels,
  - The public will understand and support public education objectives in Baltimore County as essential to continued community well-being and economic development.

### **KEY MESSAGES AND GUIDELINES**

Key messages and talking points will be developed and integrated into the strategies and action steps of the communications plan. Examples of these key messages include:

- The Curriculum Management Audit was an important undertaking initiated by the Superintendent and supported by the Board of Education in order to examine gaps between the type of education we say we are delivering to all children and what is actually taking place. The audit was designed to identify concerns and findings that might be impeding our progress as a school system and to make suggestions on how to resolve those

challenges to the benefit of advancing student achievement for all children.

- The Curriculum Management Audit identified the school system's *Blueprint for Progress* as a defining document, setting clear expectations for academic achievement for all students. A key recommendation was to create a Curriculum Management Plan to align with and support the *Blueprint for Progress* objectives.
- The Curriculum Management Plan addresses the active alignment and engagement of all factors that contribute to the successful academic growth of all children so that they reach their academic potential as they progress from grade to grade and, ultimately succeed in life beyond PreK-12 education.
- Definitions for terms included in the Curriculum Management Plan (identified in the plan glossary) will be supported through key messages and talking points.

### **TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The timeline for successful implementation of the communications plan will be closely integrated with the Curriculum Management Plan timeline. It will also be aligned with the times when, traditionally, various audiences have been exposed to information about the business of schools (e.g., budget development), academic performance (report card and MSA/HSA scores release, time taken for professional development for staff), and general times of broad public engagement and awareness (e.g., Back-to-school nights, parent conferences).

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each Work Group described in Part I will review and revise communications expectations and requirements as they relate to each part of the Curriculum Management Plan. The Chief Communications Officer will lead a Communications Work Group to review, evaluate, and revise the Communications Plan as needed. "Key Communicators" will be identified as part of the Communications Plan, and technical support will be provided by (to include, but may not be limited, to):

- Office of Communications Team
- Web Team
- Copy, Print, Distribution Team
- Parent Support Services Team

## Glossary of Terms

### **accountability**

Measurable proof that teachers, schools, districts, and states are teaching students efficiently and well

### **achievement gaps**

Differences in achievement among groups of students in relation to established standards

### **achievement tests**

Tests used to measure how much a student has learned in various school subjects

### **alignment**

The effort to ensure that what teachers teach is in accord with what the curriculum says will be taught and what is assessed

### **assessment**

Measuring the learning and performance of students

### **backward mapping**

Beginning with the end in mind; working backward from the intended goal for learning to define all of the skill instruction that will be needed to meet the identified goal

### **benchmark assessment**

Benchmark assessment results are used to determine what students have achieved in relation to particular curriculum standards.

### **collaboration**

A relationship between individuals or organizations that enables the participants to accomplish goals more successfully than they could have separately

### **cognitive demand**

Generally refers to Bloom's taxonomy and reflects a classification of thinking rather than a sequential hierarchy (understanding prior to application and analysis). High cognitive demands or thinking processes involved in solving a task can include the use of general procedures connected to underlying concepts and meaning, complex thinking, and reasoning strategies.

### **Core Learning Goals (Maryland)**

The Core Learning Goals documents align the Maryland Content Standards and the Maryland Assessment Program. The documents are formatted so that each begins with content standards or broad, measurable statements about what students should know and be able to do. Indicator statements provide the next level of specificity and begin to narrow the focus for teachers. Finally, the objectives provide teachers with very clear information about what specific learning should occur.

**curriculum**

A written plan outlining what students will be taught (a course of study). Curriculum documents often also include detailed directions or suggestions for teaching the content

**data-based decision making**

Analyzing sources of information such as student performance assessments, school performance, demographics, and other data in order to make decisions and/or actions plans based on the data

**differentiated instruction**

Offering several different learning experiences in response to students' varied needs

**disaggregated data**

Disaggregate means to separate a whole into its parts. In education, this term means that test results are sorted into groups of students who are economically disadvantaged, from racial and ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency. This practice allows parents and teachers to see more than just the average score for their child's school. Instead, parents and teachers can see how each student group is performing.

**diversity**

Diversity refers to all of the characteristics that make individuals different from each other, e.g., age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, and culture.

**English language learner (ELL)**

A student whose first language is other than English and who is in a special program for learning English

**equity**

Educational fairness, justice, and impartiality in which all children receive a high-quality education and have equal access to services and support

**evaluation**

The process used to determining the effectiveness of program

**formative assessment**

An ongoing analysis of the process and end result of a task or set of tasks to suggest future steps for teaching and learning

**higher-order thinking**

Thinking abilities that engage students in analyzing, comparing, contrasting, generalizing, problem solving, investigating, experimenting, and creating, rather than only in recalling information or facts

**high quality professional development**

High quality professional development enables teachers to develop and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to help students learn. Learning opportunities for teachers are sustained, intensive, content-based, classroom focused, and evaluated

**inclusion**

Often used synonymously with the term "mainstreaming," this term refers to the concept that students with disabilities should be integrated and included to the maximum extent possible with their (typically developing) peers in the educational setting.

**indicator**

Measurable statements about what students should know and be able to do

**learning styles**

Preferred ways by which people learn. Common learning styles include visual, auditory, kinesthetic, active, reflective, and tactile. See [BCPS Learning Styles and Preferences](#) at

< <http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/models/tips/styles.html#dlearner> >.

**metacognition**

Being aware of one's thinking process and taking conscious control of his/her own learning

**methodology**

A system of principles, practices, and procedures related to the analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them

**multicultural education**

Schooling that aims for all students to understand and relate to cultural, ethnic, and other diversity, including religion, language, gender, age, and socioeconomic, mental, and physical differences

**norm-referenced tests**

Standardized assessments designed to measure how a student's performance compares with that of other students

**pedagogy**

The art of teaching—especially the conscious use of particular instructional methods

**performance assessment**

A measurement of student achievement designed to assess what students know through their ability to perform a task or produce a product

**problem-based learning**

An instructional method that involves students actively seeking solutions to authentic, real-life problems rather than conventional study of terms and information

**professional development**

Also known as staff development, this term refers to a process of learning and keeping up-to-date in one's area of expertise

**recursive review**

Pertaining to or using a rule or procedure that can be applied repeatedly to the creation of a system of design or delivery

**rigor**

Teaching and learning that expects students to apply critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills; to analyze, evaluate, critique, synthesize, communicate, and create new knowledge; to manage and direct their own learning

**rubric**

A tool used to assess a student's progress in accomplishing a given task whereby specific descriptions of performance levels and associated point values/scores are provided

**short-cycle assessment**

Short-cycle assessment results are generally used to determine how instruction should change to address specific student needs.

**summative test**

A test given to evaluate and document what students have learned. The term is used to distinguish such tests from formative tests, which are used primarily to diagnose what students have learned in order to plan further instruction.

**standardized testing**

Tests that are administered and scored under uniform conditions. Because most machine-scored, multiple-choice tests are standardized, the term is sometimes used to refer to such tests, but other tests may also be standardized.

**standards**

Rules, outcomes, expectations or requirements

**special education**

Educational programs for students who, because they have a disability of some kind, require special instructional help to reach their potential

**special-needs students**

Students who have a physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional limitation or disability and require special instructional services and support to reach their potential

**unit of study**

A segment of a course, subject, program of study, or curriculum guide

**Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC)**

The Voluntary State Curriculum documents align the Maryland Content Standards and the Maryland Assessment Program. The curriculum documents are formatted so that each begins with content standards or broad, measurable statements about what students should know and be able to do. Indicator statements provide the next level of specificity and begin to narrow the focus for teachers. Finally, the objectives provide teachers with very clear information about what specific learning should occur.

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