

# Groton Public Schools

## Curriculum Handbook



**Approved by the Groton Board of Education 7/25/2011**

BOE Curriculum Committee Revised 12/1/2016

Revised 4/8/2019

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## Curriculum Handbook Committee Members

Special thanks to the original handbook members:

Linda Bacon, Jennifer Billeci, Mary Anne Butler, Susan Chase-Hildebrand, Marielizabeth Crompton, Seth Danner, Christine Dauphinais, Donna Duley, Monica Franzone, Mary Hammerstein, Carolyn Hazard, Maureen Klein, Lynn Mariani, Carol Marsiglio, Henry Martinez, Mark Masterjoseph, Sean McKenna, Monson Lane, Ricardo Murallo, Stacy Popp, Christina Rodgers, Daneen Roth, Jacquelyn Schaefer, Laura Suarez-Olsen, Jon Woodman.

Additional members 2016:

Dr. Andrea Ackerman, Joseph Arcarese, Susan Austin, Allison Brown, Matt Brown, Kerry Carter, Amanda Chiasson, Maggie Courter, Andrea Davis, Judy Donato, Shaun Farquhar, Sue Gwaltney, Terry Henkle, Nadine Kerr, Corry Mott, Amy Murphy, Erin Pezqueda, Kristen Phelps, Anna Maria Streips, Janine Sullivan, Rita Volkmann, Kim Watson, Steve Wheeler, Kathy Wilson.

### Introduction

The Groton Public Schools Handbook of Curriculum Development and Implementation provides a process for developing, revising, and evaluating curriculum, instructional programs and assessment. Curriculum content is based on state and national standards. The curriculum will reflect Groton Public Schools mission of teaching and learning. As learners, all students will have common learning experiences that include opportunities to demonstrate collaborative learning, critical thinking, problem solving, global citizenship, digital literacy, creativity and innovation. The curriculum will also emphasize students' development in the areas of communication including the use of interactive technologies, the ability to evaluate the credibility of digital information, the interpretation of embedded literacy across the content areas and the strengthening of personal responsibility.

The Curriculum & Instruction Council will coordinate the review and development of curriculum, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education. This curriculum handbook is intended for use with The CT Curriculum Development Guide: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/site/default.asp>.

## Curriculum Development Process

The Goals of the BOE Curriculum Committee.

1. To establish a framework (GPS Curriculum Handbook) for reviewing proposed new courses and major revisions of existing curriculum.
2. To establish a Board of Education curriculum timeline (GPS Curriculum Handbook) for curriculum review being cognizant of national standards.
3. To ensure that agendas for curriculum meetings include referral list items.

The Curriculum & Instruction Council, Administrative Council, and Teaching & Learning Department will gather information to determine the curriculum needs of the district and will develop a list of curriculum priorities subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education. Needs and priorities will be based upon the following:

- Groton Public Schools Strategic School Plan
- Changes in national, state, or local curriculum standards
- Changes in national or state mandates
- Analysis of national, state, and local student assessment data
- Analysis of exemplary ideas, practices, and/or programs which experience and research has shown to be successful
- Collaborate with District Data Team/student outcomes
- Collaborate with the Groton Teaching & Learning Collaborative
- Results of formal program evaluations
- Grade level/course expectations
- Student needs/interest
- Middle School and High School new course recommendations
- Budget

The curriculum development process includes the following steps: (See Appendices)

1. Curriculum Analysis: The existing curriculum will be reviewed annually for alignment with national, state, local, or professional guidelines, standards, philosophies, and a defined curriculum model. Modification to existing curricula will be reviewed and revised per the curriculum timeline. The review process will consider current student needs data, student achievement data, and student interest data provided by the Assistant Superintendent.

2. Current Curriculum Input: The Curriculum and Instruction Council, along with curriculum task forces, are in place to research best practices aligned to Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. A district curriculum, instruction, and assessment platform is in place to ensure that teachers and administrators have access to current documents on the GPS website. The BOE Curriculum subcommittee reviews plans for new courses and major revisions of curriculum and sends suggested new courses to the BOE COW for approval to draft curriculum. Once revised or written, new curriculum and major revisions are reviewed by the Curriculum and Instruction Council and sent to the BOE for final approval and implementation.
  
3. Goal Setting: Based on analysis of data, the District Data Team and the Curriculum & Instruction Council will set goals and revised timelines for the development process.
  
4. Initial Development: Teams of teachers and curriculum specialists write curriculum. These Ad Hoc Curricular writing committee will produce a draft curriculum in accordance with this Groton Public Schools Curriculum handbook's section on curriculum format, and aligned with the Connecticut Curriculum Development Guide and will be invited to the Curriculum and Instructional Council to report on progress. Through the implementation process, staff will be surveyed and their feedback used for modifications.

## Responsibilities of PreK-12 Curriculum Writing Committees

The appropriate administrator will be appointed for each curriculum project (PreK-12) by the Assistant Superintendent.

Administrators' roles:

- Determine the scope of the writing project.
- Select the composition of the writing team.
- Schedule meetings and monitor progress of the project.
- Update the Assistant Superintendent about project status.
- Submit the draft to the Assistant Superintendent for initial approval and/or suggestions for further revision.
- Present the draft to the Curriculum & Instruction Council, then the Board of Education.
- Provide compensation to teachers, as appropriate, per the GEA or AGSA contract.

Writing Team will:

*Schedule C* of the GEA contract will determine payment for curriculum writing. Release time, as mutually agreed upon, may be considered in some cases.

- Follow the curriculum format as outlined in this document.
- Complete the curriculum map found on pages 9-12.
- Present the draft to the Curriculum & Instruction Council, then the Curriculum subcommittee of the Board of Education, then to the full Board of Education.
- Be provided compensation as appropriate per the GEA Teacher's contract.

## Curriculum Format

Curriculum Maps contain each of the following components:

- A. Title Page, Year of Adoption
- B. Philosophy
  - a. Beliefs about teaching and learning that are common across all Groton curricula.
  - b. Beliefs about the most effective teaching strategies for this curriculum area.
- C. Learning Environment
  - a. Statements about the optimal learning environment for all students in all curriculum areas.
  - b. Statements about the optimal learning environment for this curriculum area.
- D. Goals for this curriculum area.
- E. Curriculum Standards PreK-12 (use Connecticut State Department of Education Standards – Curriculum Frameworks where they exist)
  - a. Common Core States Standards
  - b. Grade/Course Level Expectations (GLEs)
  - c. Scope and Sequence
- F. Curriculum Map
  - a. Introduction: Course Purpose, Major Learning Goals and Understandings, Titles and duration of Units/Themes/Concepts and Authors of each map.
  - b. Part 1 of Each Unit/Theme/Concept (Unit) includes Grade, Subject, Course, Length of Unit, Big Idea and Essential Question.
  - c. Part 2 (Standards) of Each Unit includes Priority Content/Process Standards, Key Grade/Course Level Expectations (GLEs) Knowledge, Concepts, Skills that promote higher-order thinking according to Bloom’s Taxonomy.
  - d. Part 3 (Common Unit Assessments) can be formative or summative. Assessments include description of what students must produce/perform as indicators of mastery of this unit. Assessments are scored with district

rubrics and/or scoring guides and may include student self-assessment. Assessments should demonstrate evidence of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

- e. Part 4 (Common/Assured Learning Experiences) includes a description of what all students will have experienced in this unit district-wide, such as critical projects, readings, field trips, inquiry experiences, instructional tools and strategies. Common learning experiences include opportunities to demonstrate collaborative learning, critical thinking, problem solving, global citizenship, digital literacy, creativity and innovation.
- f. Part 5 (Teacher Notes) includes a description of essential print and non-print resources, culturally relevant text at varied readability levels, grouping arrangements or other instructional strategies appropriate to the age, skill level, readiness and learning styles/modalities of students.

#### G. Checklist for Layout

- a. Templates used
- b. Paginated
- c. Sections identified
- d. Document – read-only format, published on GPS website
- e. Appendix for additional information



**Groton Public Schools  
Curriculum Map**

INTRODUCTION

Course Title:  
Curriculum Area and Grade:

Course Purpose:

Major Learning Goals and Understandings:
Student Learning Expectation(s):

<b>Units/Theme/Concept and # of Weeks</b>	
Quarter = 9 weeks, Semester=18 weeks, Trimester= 12 weeks, Year=36 weeks --- usually spread over 40 weeks	
1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	8.

9.	10.
11.	12.
13.	14.
15.	16.

**Mappers/Authors:**

Date Approved:

<b>Part 1 - Unit/Theme/Concept</b>			
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Course:</b>	<b>Length of Unit: (# of weeks)</b>

Common Core State Standards
Supporting Standards
Connecticut State Standards

<b>Part 2 – Standards</b>		
<b>Key (GLE) Content Knowledge and Concepts/Skills</b>		<b>Bloom’s Taxonomy Levels Creating, Evaluating, Analyzing, Applying, Understanding and Remembering</b>
The students will know:	The students will be able to:	
1.	1.	1.

### Big Idea and Essential Questions

- **Big Ideas**
- **Essential Questions**

### Part 3 – Common Unit Assessments

Includes description of what students must produce/perform as indicators of mastery of this unit. Either **literacy** (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and presenting) or **numeracy skills** should be required in the task. Students should apply age-appropriate content-specific technologies and **technology applications**. Assessments must be common to teachers of this unit.

Authentic assessment  
Concept maps  
Formative assessments  
Portfolio / rubric  
Self-assessment  
Peer assessment

Summative assessments  
Oral presentations/rubric  
Written report/rubric  
Performance assessment/rubric  
Case study/ seminar/ mathematical thinking/ rubric

### Part 4 – Common/Assured Learning Experiences

Includes a description of what all students will have experienced in this unit district-wide, such as critical projects, readings, field trips, or experiments. Learning activities must: promote higher order thinking, use learning and technology, and respect learner differences. The effective teaching strategies and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills listed below should be used as a reference when developing the common assured learning experiences. After completing the descriptions of the learning experiences, please check the appropriate boxes.

## Part 5-Teacher Notes

**Each unit will include embedded technology and literacy.**

**This section provides recommendations for each unit with the understanding that content resources and technology are dynamic in nature and their relevance is time sensitive. Teachers are encouraged to use additional technologies and text to achieve the same objectives.**

Includes a description of essential print and non-print resources, grouping arrangements and other instructional strategies.

When selecting resources, teachers should consider:

- Check alignment to the unit
- Vary selections according to age, skill level, readiness and learning styles of learners
- Include varied readability levels
- Include varied culturally relevant resources that have been reviewed for bias
- Include appropriate technologies
- Explain purposeful use of resources
- Collaborate with the library/media specialist regarding Internet sources and information

## Curriculum Review and Approval Process

1. Draft Curriculum, Write, Review and Feedback: The draft curriculum document will be reviewed with feedback with the Curriculum and Instruction Council and BOE Curriculum Committee, prior to moving to the BOE for approval.
2. Board Approval: The curriculum will be presented to the Board of Education for approval. The Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for ensuring that the curriculum complies with the requirements of this document in substance, form, and quality. Upon endorsement by the full Board of Education, system-wide implementation of the program will commence. The curriculum, with the exception of assessments and teacher notes will be posted on the website. Copies of the curriculum will be distributed to all participating teachers, staff, and principals.
3. Professional Development: A plan including specific training and peer collaboration for professional development will be recommended to the Groton Teaching & Learning Collaborative by the Assistant Superintendent. Professional development for teachers and administrators will be an ongoing component of the curriculum implementation process. New staff and transfers will be trained as needed.
4. Revision: Through the implementation phase, feedback from involved teachers will be reviewed by the Curriculum Task Forces and Assistant Superintendent. After analysis, the curriculum document will be revised or enhanced as appropriate.
5. PowerSchool: If needed, the PowerTeacher Gradebook in PowerSchool will be updated.
6. Report Card Alignment: The existing report card will be reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with curriculum revisions and standards.
7. Full Implementation: The revised curriculum will be implemented in accordance with Board of Education policy.
8. Program Evaluation: The program will be continuously monitored by the Curriculum Task Forces, District Data team, and Assistant Superintendent through the collection and analysis of assessments and feedback from teachers. Periodic updates will be presented to the Board of Education.

## Appendices

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**Groton Public Schools  
Proposed Program/Text Survey**

To be distributed to staff who have piloted the curriculum materials/technology.

Title/Publisher	
Course Name	
Grade	
Name of Reviewer:	

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The program/text is presented at a level appropriate for the grade/course. (Lexile Level)					
The program/text provides for differentiated materials.					
The program/text provides a variety of teaching strategies.					
The program/text provides a variety of performance tasks.					
The program/text is designed for professional learning.					
The program/text includes on-line supported technology.					
The program/text covers the CCSS/NGSS standards outlined in the GPS course curriculum.					
The program/text provides a variety of inquiry activities.					
The assessments are aligned with the standards and the Grade Level Expectations.					

Comments:

**Groton Public Schools  
Groton, CT  
New Textbook Request/Review Form**

Course Title:	Date of Review:
Content Area:	Title:
Name of reviewer:	Author/Publisher
Copyright date/Edition:	Grade Level(s):

Rate the textbook by using the following scale of 1 to 5:  
(1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest)

Score	Description
	Is the text aligned with the Common Core State Standards, Connecticut State Standards and National curriculum standards?
	Does the text support the content and objectives of the curriculum?
	Does the text reinforce critical thinking, problem solving and higher order thinking skills?
	Is the style of writing interesting, clear and appropriate for the students at this grade level?
	Are photographs, graphs, drawings, tables, diagrams and charts used effectively to support students' interpretation of and access to the content?
	Is the text balanced in gender representation?
	Does the text provide a fair and balanced representation of diverse cultures in valued roles and positive situations?
	Does the text provide a sufficient quantity and quality of assessments?
	Does the text support writing within the content area?
	Does the text provide authentic problems, issues or scenarios within and across the content areas for students to evaluate?
	Is there technology to support the text?
	Does the teacher's manual include specific teaching strategies and supplemental lessons to assist the teacher meet the needs of all students?



**Groton Public Schools  
Groton, CT  
New Textbook Review Form**

Does the text have an online version? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

What is the Lexile level of the text? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the outstanding features of the text?

What are the shortcomings of the text?

Should the textbook be adopted? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Additional comments:

Signature of reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Request for Textbook Retirement Form

Name of Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Textbook title: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Edition and copyright date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ ISBN: \_\_\_\_\_

Current inventory: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this textbook used across the district at the same grade level/course?

Rationale for discontinuing the use of the textbook:

Proposal for replacement textbook/resources:

Building Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Superintendent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Request Approved by Curriculum Department?      Yes              No

Business Office recommended disposal method: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the Teaching & Learning Office. Upon receipt of the form the Office of Teaching & Learning will arrange for the request to be added to the Curriculum & Instruction Council agenda to consider the appropriate course of action.

**Groton Public Schools  
Request for Curriculum Modification**

This information should be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction as early as possible in the year so that it may be included for budgetary consideration and Board of Education approval, if required. Changes which do not create a significant financial impact may be processed and approved more quickly.

School submitting request: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff submitting request: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date to begin proposed change: \_\_\_\_\_

Check below:

\_\_\_\_\_ Major Modifications to existing curriculum

\_\_\_\_\_ New course

Please respond to the following questions on a separate sheet and attach:

1. What is the proposed major change?
2. To what degree is the new program consistent with the existing curricula and philosophy of the district?
3. What data supports the need for the proposed change?
4. How will the effectiveness of the proposed change be measured?
5. What will be the timeline for the proposed project?
6. What will the financial impact be? Delineate the costs.

## Curriculum Revision Timeline

Pending funding and recommendations from stakeholders.

Subject	Grade	Recent Last Revision	Proposed Next Revision	Implementation Phase 1	Implementation Phase 2
Art	PK-5	2007	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	6-8				
	9-12				
Business Education	9-12		2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Family Consumer Science/Culinary Arts	6-12	2007	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Guidance	6-8	2012	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
	9-12				
Health	PK-5	2006	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	6-8		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	9-12		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Language Arts-Writing	PK-5	2002	2017-2018	2017-2018	2018-2020
	6-8		2017-2018	2017-2018	2018-2020
	9-12		2020-2021	2020-2021	2021-2022
Language Arts-Reading	PK-5	2002	2018-2019	2017-2019	2019-2020
	6-8		2018-2019	2017-2019	2019-2020
	9-12		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Math	PK-5	2009	2018-2020	2018-2020	2020-2021
	6-8	2010	2018-2020	2018-2020	2020-2021
	9-12	2011	2018-2020	2018-2020	2020-2021
Media Technology	PK-12				
Music – general	PK-8		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Music - Chorus	4-8	2005	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	9-12				
Music - Instrumental	6-8	2005	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	9-12				
Music – Strings	4-8	2006	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022

Physical Education	PK-5	2008	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
	6-8	2009	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
	9-12	Draft	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Science	PK-8	2006	2018-2020	2020-2022	2022-2023
	9-12	2007	2018-2020	2020-2022	2022-2023
Social Studies	PK-5	2007	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
	6-8		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
	9-12		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Technology Education	6-12		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
World Languages	6-12	2008	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022

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## Glossary

Alignment	<i>The degree to which assessments, curriculum, instruction, instructional materials, professional development and accountability systems reflect and reinforce the educational program's objectives and standards.</i>
Assessment	<i>The measurement of knowledge, skills and beliefs to determine the level of student achievement in a particular content area (e.g., performance-based assessments, written exams, quizzes).</i>
Big Idea	<i>Key generalization or enduring understanding that students will take with them after the completion of a learning unit.</i>
Common Formative/Summative Assessment	<i>A broad term for assessments that are given routinely to all students in a grade and/or content area and that are the same for all students in a grade or course. Common assessments may be formative or summative.</i>
Culturally Responsive Materials	<i>Texts and materials that positively reinforce cultural identity and have affirming views of individuals of diverse backgrounds, including African Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians and Hispanic Americans. Historically, literature written by and for these groups of people generally lies outside of the literary canon, recommended book lists, and the school curriculum.</i>
Curriculum	<i>Guaranteed course of study and learning objectives that integrates standards, instructional strategies, materials and assessments to ensure that all students are able to achieve standards.</i>
Curriculum Framework	<i>Vertical and horizontal alignment of skills, concepts and content Pre-K to 12.</i>  <a href="http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&amp;Q=320954&amp;sdenav_gid=1757">http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&amp;Q=320954&amp;sdenav_gid=1757</a>
Curriculum Map with Pacing Guide	<i>Order and time period in which skills and concepts must evolve sequentially within a grade level or course.</i>
District-Wide Benchmark Assessment (DWBA)	<i>Assessments given K-8 at specific times in the year across the district in Language Arts, Science, Mathematics and Writing, developed by the district, administered on a regular basis for all priority standards and evaluated using a common rubric.</i>

Embedded Information Technology	<i>Skills related to information, media and technology across the content areas.</i>
Embedded Literacy	<i>Skills related to reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting across content areas.</i>
Essential Question	<i>Also known as focus question; a question formed with the end in mind by identifying learning objectives at the beginning of a unit, posed to students before instruction, able to be answered by the big idea when instruction is complete.</i>
Formative Assessment	<i>Process used by teachers to determine how to adjust instruction in response to student needs. Formative assessments are used to inform and adjust instruction and are not used to evaluate student progress for a grade.</i>
Grade Level Expectation (GLE)	<i>A description of what students should know and be able to do at the end of a grade level.</i>
Higher Order Thinking	<i>The idea that some types of thinking require more cognitive processing than others and also have more generalized benefits. In Bloom's Taxonomy, for example, skills involving analysis, evaluation, and creation are considered to be of a higher order, involving more complex judgmental skills, than the learning of facts and concepts, which require rote memory and recall.</i>
Philosophy (general and content-specific beliefs about teaching and learning)	<i>District beliefs and guidelines citing reasons for learning the content, proposing most effective ways all students learn, derived from an effective assessment model and national research-based trends that link student learning to society and culture, present and future.</i>
Program Goal	<i>Broad, overarching goals that relate to all students in the K-12 continuum within the curricular area.</i>
Scope and Sequence	<i>What should be taught, to what depth, and when it should be taught.</i>
Standard	<p><i><u>Standard</u>: Reflects what all students should know and be able to do in a specific curriculum area, or course, at specific grades.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i><u>Content Standard</u>– What the student is expected to know and be able to do by the end of the grade, based on National Standards and State of Connecticut Frameworks.</i></li> <li>• <i><u>Priority Standard</u> – The Content/Process Standards identified as the most important for mastery.</i></li> </ul>



Summative Assessment	<i>Assessment that is employed mainly to assess cumulative student learning at a particular point (e.g., unit tests, final exams, performance assessments, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, the NGSS Summative Assessment, SAT).</i>
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Learning	<i>21<sup>st</sup> Century learning is a blend of content knowledge, specific skills, expertise, and literacies. Every 21st century skills implementation requires the development of core academic subject knowledge and understanding among all students. Students must think critically and communicate effectively and must build on a base of core academic subject knowledge. Students must also learn the essential skills for success in today's world, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration.</i> <a href="http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework">http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework</a>