



Union County Educational Services Commission  
Westfield, New Jersey

# High School Curriculum & Instruction Guide

September 2023

**UNION COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
HIGH SCHOOL UNIT AND LESSON DESIGN MANUAL**

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## Instructional Beliefs and Best Practices

**1. We plan and prepare intellectually engaging, differentiated, and rigorous lessons by:**

- Employing our knowledge of the content and pedagogy to anchor our lessons
- Using our knowledge of individual students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, and interests when planning for differentiated instruction
- Designing learning activities that reflect rigorous learning and different levels of the Depth of Knowledge Wheel
- Working collaboratively with our peers to design learning activities that adhere to the district-approved curriculum

**2. We create safe, positive, nurturing, and supporting classroom environments by:**

- Establishing and enforcing routines and rituals that are designed with our students' needs in mind
- Recognizing every student as an individual deserving of respect
- Believing that each student is capable of growth and communicating that belief to the learner
- Monitoring and responding to behaviors that impede learning

**3. We utilize instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of all learners by:**

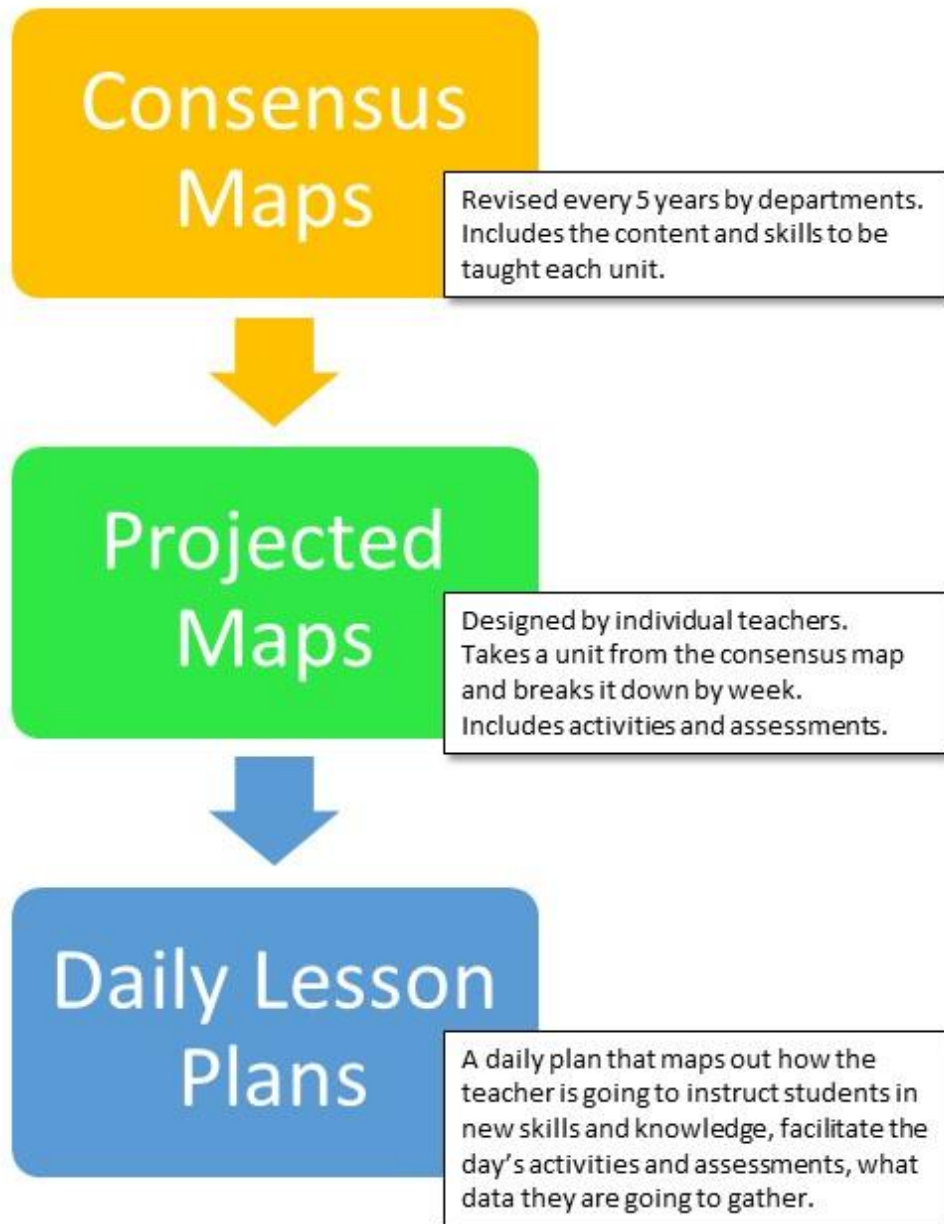
- Setting and communicating high academic expectations
- Differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of each learner
- Using high-quality formative and summative assessments to inform instruction
- Engaging students in questioning designed to deepen student understanding and participate in higher levels of thinking

**4. We embrace our role as professional educators by:**

- Reflecting on and accepting student outcomes
- Participating in high-quality professional development in order to develop techniques that will increase student learning
- Participating in Professional Learning Communities designed to increase student learning
- Maintaining a high level of ethics and professionalism in dealings with students and other staff members

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Curriculum and Lesson Design



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Consensus Maps

Consensus maps are designed by the department in consultation with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and are revised every five years. They can be found in the UCESC Curriculum Manual, on the UCESC website, and on the Team Drive for each department. These maps are required to be followed by all teachers.

**Consensus Map Format:**

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
Number of Weeks						
Topic(s)						
Essential Question						
Big Idea(s)						
Standards						
Content						
Skills						
Assessments Content and Skills						
Resources						
Amistad and Holocaust Connections						

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## Projected Maps

Projected maps are developed by individual teachers and are continuously changing. Teachers are required to create a projected map for each unit of instruction. Maps can be changed before, during, and after the unit is complete. They will be reviewed with the administration monthly. The original working version of each projected map is required to be kept in the Teacher Instructional Planning Folder in the school's team drive. All projected maps must be in the folder a minimum of one week before beginning the unit.

### **Instructions for Projected Mapping:**

#### Before Beginning the Unit

1. Determine the number of weeks for the unit.
2. List the Essential Question(s) for each unit. The essential question must be focused on engaging students in the unit. This open-ended question should help the students understand how the material relates to their lives or why it is important for them to learn the skills and/or content. Further information on Essential Questions can be found later in this manual.
3. List the standard(s) for the unit. Be specific regarding which standard(s) will be taught each week. 4. List all content and skills that will be taught each week in the unit. Begin with the final week of the unit and work backward.
5. List every activity/formative assessment that students will be doing for each week; hyperlinks to activities or handouts are acceptable.
6. List any project-based and/or common assessments under the week in which the students will work on/take them.

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Projected Maps

**Projected Map Format:**

Unit:	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Essential Question								
Standard(s) *number only								
Skills and Content								
Activities/ Formative Assessments								
Project Based/ Common Assessments								

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## Daily Lesson Plans

Daily Lesson Plans (DLPs) are developed by individual teachers in order to serve as a road map for the day's instruction. They are required to be aligned to the Consensus and Projected maps. DLPs should include information on all aspects of the lesson, including, but not limited to, the elements included in the Elements of a Successful Lesson and the DLP Format. All original working versions of DLPs for the week are to be in the Teacher Instructional Planning Folder in the school's team drive by Monday at 8:30 a.m. Building administrators will meet with teachers weekly to review lesson plans. Certified staff are encouraged to use the Daily Lesson Plan Review Form (found in this manual) to do a self-review of their lesson plans.

### **Student Reading Level:**

During the month of September, all students will be assessed in order to establish their baseline reading level. These reading levels will be shared with all teachers. At this time, teachers will also receive student standardized test scores. Teachers will meet in school teams to share information on student learning readiness and learning style. Teachers will be asked to utilize this information when planning student learning activities.

### **Differentiation:**

Teachers are asked to consider the following elements of differentiated instruction when writing Daily Lesson Plans:

- Ensuring an environment that actively supports students in the work of learning (mindset, connections, community)
- Absolute clarity about the learning destination with high-quality curriculum (goal clarity, engagement, understanding)
- Persistently knowing where students are in relation to the destination all along the way (pre-assessment, formative assessment)
- Adjusting teaching to make sure each student arrives at the destination and, when possible, moves beyond it (differentiation in response to student readiness, interest, and learning preferences)
- Leading/managing the classroom for flexibility (student-teacher partnerships, routines, and processes that support flexible teaching and learning)



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Daily Lesson Plans

**Union County Educational Services Commission Daily Lesson Plan**

Teacher:	Unit (from Consensus Map)			Week (from Projected Map)	
Week Of:					
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Essential Question</b>					
<b>Knowledge (What will they know by the end of the lesson?)</b>					
<b>Skills (What will they be able to do by the end of the lesson?)</b>					
<b>Do Now</b>					
<b>Review</b>					
<b>New Information and Modeling</b>					
<b>Activities (Title with link)</b>					
<b>SEL Skill Focus</b>					

**\*Any documents or handouts you will be using during your lesson can be listed by title and then linked to the assignment/handout.**

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## Instructions for Linking Assignments on Projected Maps and Daily Lesson Plans

1. On the document you want to link to your map/DLP, click on SHARE in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
2. A box will pop up. Click on COPY LINK in the box titled 'Get Link.'
3. Open your map or DLP and highlight the text where you want the link.
4. Right-click and select LINK.
5. Paste the link into the box and click APPLY.

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UCESC Daily Lesson Plan Format Review Form

Lesson Plan Element	Included (YES or NO)	Comments/Suggestions
Unit is aligned with the curriculum map		
Essential Question is open-ended and assists students in making meaning out of the content and/or skills		
Do Now can be completed by the students independently without teacher guidance. Do Now will be completed in less than 5 minutes.		
The teacher has planned a review of information and/or skills that are relevant to the day's learning objective.		
The teacher presents new information that is relevant to the day's learning objective.		
The teacher models the day's learning activity.		
The teacher utilizes formative assessment to check for understanding of the new material and the student's ability to complete the learning activity.		
Learning activity is differentiated for learners at various levels of readiness.		
The teacher has planned a formative assessment to check for student understanding at the end of the lesson.		

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## Elements of a Successful Lesson

### **Aim/Instructional Objective**

- a. Frames the lesson
- b. Concept, skills, and content that are to be learned in that lesson
- c. In a developmental lesson, the instructional objective is the highest-order skill students learn in a lesson
- d. The Aim is written in the form of a critical thinking question that can be answered
- e. Less is more

### **Do Now/Problem of the Day**

- a. Can help segue into a lesson, as in a journal entry
- b. Can be completed independently by every student in the class, regardless of knowledge base or skill level (not an assessment of a previous lesson)
- c. Brief, 5 minutes at the most
- d. For 2021-22, Daily Check-In

### **Mini Lesson**

- a. Whole group instruction
- b. Conceptual framework
  - i. Motivation
  - ii. Connections
- c. The teacher reviews and introduces new material and models
- d. The teacher asks pivotal questions and elicits responses from students to check for understanding - formative assessment
- e. The teacher uses Accountable Talk to engage students in a discussion of the material, concepts, and/or skills.

### **Guided Practice**

- a. Students work in cooperative learning groups, small groups, pairs, think-pair-share, or individually b. Teacher circulates to check for understanding, work with one group of students, or conference with individual students - formative assessment
- c. Check for understanding, not just for completion
- d. Alternative strategies
- e. Teacher works with students to reflect on their work and provides feedback.

### **Sharing Out**

- a. Students share their work verbally or on the board
- b. Students not presenting have the responsibility to critique work constructively (accountable talk)
- c. Teacher checks for understanding

### **Summary/Formative Assessment**

- a. Can students discuss the Essential Question using material from that day's class? b. Exit card, summary question, feedback form, etc.
- c. Exit Cards for 2021-22 will be the End of Class Reflection

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### Differentiation

“Note that differentiation relates more to addressing students' different phases of learning from novice to capable to proficient rather than merely providing different activities to different (groups of) students.” —John Hattie, *Visible Learning for Teachers*

Due to our students' diverse learning and social-emotional needs, it is imperative that differentiation take place during every lesson. It is important to recognize that differentiation takes place during planning, lesson implementation, and assessment.

#### **Differentiation in Planning**

Teachers will use the New Jersey Department of Education's Learning Acceleration plan when planning. This asks teachers to develop lessons and tasks that engage the most advanced students and then differentiate by providing scaffolding to all other students. This ensures that all students have access to a high-quality learning experience while receiving the support they need. All teachers are asked to note ways in which the mini-lesson and activities will be differentiated on their Daily Lesson Plans.

#### **Differentiation in Pedagogy**

The strategies a teacher uses to engage students in mastering curricular concepts and skills impact student growth and achievement most. In order to ensure the strategies utilized to meet the needs of all students, differentiation in pedagogy must take place. While working with students, teachers must utilize differentiated strategies that allow students to take ownership of elements of the classroom environment, informed by consistent and meaningful assessment (see below), and are selected based on the knowledge of the students. Engaging students in learning tasks is successful when teachers take students' academic and social-emotional readiness into consideration. In addition, all curricula should be linked to student interests and/or ways in which the curriculum applies to their lives and the world around them. Teachers are encouraged to include notes in their Daily Lesson Plans or instructional materials specific to how their pedagogy will be differentiated.

#### **Differentiation in Assessment**

Differentiation cannot occur without regular, well-designed, and meaningful assessment. The purpose of assessment must always be to measure students' progress toward meeting learning goals and then to plan ways to move them along in this journey. Differentiation in assessment means planning for assessments that help teachers identify where a student is at the beginning of the unit, how the student will proceed toward the learning objectives, and when a student has accomplished their learning goals.

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## Essential Questions

A well-designed essential question will increase student engagement, and, therefore, student achievement. When designing Essential Questions, teachers must ensure:

- Essential questions are different from the variety of important questions teachers ask throughout the class period.
- Essential Questions are open-ended. There is no single or pre-determined answer. Responses to the question are arguable and require reasoning.
- Essential Questions lead to big ideas.
- Essential Questions recur and should be revisited.
- Essential Questions spark inquiry and raise other questions.
- Each unit should have a single Essential Question.
- Essential Questions are not specific to one content area.

Here are some examples of Essential Questions:

1. How does art reflect, as well as shape, culture?
2. What is the relationship between popularity and greatness?
3. What creates a disappointing legacy in a leader?
4. To what extent are science and common sense related?
5. How can stories from other places and times be about me?
6. How do we know when we know?



## New Jersey Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and Sub-Competencies



### Self-Awareness

- Recognize one's feelings and thoughts
- Recognize the impact of one's feelings and thoughts on one's own behavior
- Recognize one's personal traits, strengths, and limitations
- Recognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges



### Self-Management

- Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
- Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals
- Identify and apply ways to persevere or overcome barriers through alternative methods to achieve one's goals



### Social Awareness

- Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of others
- Demonstrate an awareness of the differences among individuals, groups, and others' cultural backgrounds
- Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
- Demonstrate an awareness of the expectations for social interactions in a variety of settings



### Responsible Decision-Making

- Develop, implement, and model effective problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Identify the consequences associated with one's actions in order to make constructive choices
- Evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions



### Relationship Skills

- Establish and maintain healthy relationships
- Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
- Identify ways to resist inappropriate social pressure
- Demonstrate the ability to prevent and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways
- Identify who, when, where, or how to seek help for oneself or others when needed

\*Adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education in August 2017

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## Social Emotional Learning

Social-Emotional Learning strategies are expected to be integrated into all aspects of instruction. Direct instruction in these strategies will occur during Life Skills courses; however, it is best practice to provide students with opportunities to practice using these strategies and skills in the classroom. Teachers are expected to identify an SEL Skill Focus for each day and include that in the appropriate row of their Daily Lesson Plan. The New Jersey Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and Sub-Competencies (found on the previous page) can be helpful when identifying SEL strategies that you will be utilizing in each day’s lesson.

Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Responsible Decision Making	Relationship Skills
Receiving Feedback Giving Self-feedback (commendations and recommendations) Self-Reflection Goal Setting (personal and academic) Group and Partner Work Prioritizing Growth Mindset Perseverance and Grit	Speaking, Listening and Collaboration Self-Reflection Goal Setting (personal and academic) Creating Action Plans Setting and Following Deadlines Seeking Help Organizational Skills	Questioning and Discussion Strategies Speaking, Listening and Collaboration Using Accountable Talk Prompts Offering Feedback Reflection on Essential Questions Service Learning Leadership Opportunities	Self-Reflection Goal Setting Problem Solving Tasks and Scenarios Requiring Analysis in Student Assignments	Questioning and Discussion Strategies Speaking, Listening and Collaboration Offering Feedback Group and Partner Work Sharing Teamwork



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## Assessment

**Formative Assessments:** Data collection needs to occur during every class period. It is imperative that the data collected during each class period is utilized when planning and revising future DLPs and Projected Maps.

1. Identify the learning objective for the day.
2. Ask yourself what question, activity, or assessment will help determine if each student met that day's objective. **This is one of your formative assessments; note this in your DLP.**
3. During or after the class (depending on the formative assessment), review the data and ask yourself:
  - a. *Who met the learning objective?*
  - b. *Who did not meet the learning objective?*
  - c. *What is the next step for those who met the learning objective?*
  - d. *What interventions are necessary for those who did not meet the learning objective?*
  - e. *How do I need to modify future lessons based on the answers to the above questions?*

**Common Summative Assessments:** At the end of each unit, students will take an assessment that was designed by departmental teams. Teachers will use the results of these assessments to provide remediation to individuals and groups of students, reflect on their teaching, and work with other department members to modify instruction in order to ensure all students are growing in their skills and knowledge. Like Consensus Maps, common assessments are revised every five years based on data collected since the last revision.

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Assessment

**Formative Assessment Tracker:**

The Formative Assessment Tracker is a great way to track student skill and knowledge acquisition when using questioning as a formative assessment tool. List student names on the chart and use the codes listed below the chart to track student progress.

Teacher Name:

Period:

Student Name	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	Mini Lesson	Post Class	Mini Lesson	Post Class	Mini Lesson	Post Class	Mini Lesson	Post Class	Mini Lesson	Post Class

- ✓ Student seems to understand the material
- ✓+ Student has a thorough understanding of the material
- ✗ Student needs extra help in order to understand the material

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## Writing Instruction Across the Curriculum

Teachers in all content areas are encouraged to utilize the RACE format when assigning writing. Whether it is a one-paragraph response or a full essay, students can utilize this format to ensure they create a strong claim, provide evidence to support their claim, and explain how that evidence supports their claim.

**R**     Restate the question- Use the question stem to write your first sentence.

**A**     Answer the question- Make sure to answer ALL parts of the question.

**C**     Cite Evidence- You MUST quote the text. Use a transition word to introduce your evidence.

**E**     Explain and Extend your Evidence- Explain WHAT this evidence is saying and explain how this evidence supports your answer.

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2023 – 2024 Department Meetings

All meetings run from 2:40PM – 3:40PM

Check the schedule in your Department's Shared Drive for each meeting's location

October 17, 2023

October 24, 2023

November 7, 2023

December 12, 2023

December 19, 2023

January 2, 2024

January 9, 2024

January 16, 2024

February 20, 2024

February 27, 2024

March 5, 2024

March 12, 2024

April 30, 2024

May 7, 2024

May 4, 2024

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Forms and Resources

Accountable Talk  
UCESC Curriculum Framework  
Consensus Mapping Form  
Projected Mapping Form  
Daily Lesson Planning Form  
RACE Poster and Cheat Sheet  
Academic Writing Prompts

***\*All these resources and subject-specific resources can be found in the Departmental Shared Drives, as well as linked [HERE](#).***