

Curricular Foundations for School Change

School Reform: Module Three

Course Description

Implementing changes to a school's curriculum can be challenging for teachers and students. In an era of accountability and high-stakes testing, curricular change often occurs through analyzing and acting on data from standardized tests. This professional development module will encourage participants to dissect the forces leading to schoolwide curricular changes while also focusing on the impact of that change on staff and students. It is part of a 3-credit course in School Reform.

Competencies

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to

- Identify factors that influence curricular decision-making
- Explain the role of standards and high-stakes testing on school-wide curricular movements
- Articulate professional development and technology needs for schools undergoing curricular change

Materials

All materials are accessed via the [CaseNEX website](#) using the PIN provided and the user name/password you create.

All readings listed can be found by going to *Class Materials*→*Virtual Library*→*Readings (Search)*.

If you do not have the most recent versions of the following software, please download each from the given sites.

- [Windows Media Player](#)
- [RealPlayer](#)
- [Adobe Reader](#)

Cases Used

- South Fayette High School

[Course requirements and grades](#)

Course Schedule

Find session dates by selecting *Syllabus* on the top menu bar. For typical courses, final Discussions, Journals, and Workbooks are due by Saturday at midnight unless otherwise noted. Please see the News Flash for any alterations of the course schedule posted by your instructor.

Introductory Session

Exploring the CaseNEX Site

Complete these tasks prior to the beginning of Session 1.

Readings

Read the course requirements, paying special attention to the Case-Analysis and Workbook Assignment Rubrics. They will be used by your instructor throughout the course to evaluate assignments where appropriate.

Discussion

Post one entry introducing yourself to your classmates. Describe your educational and teaching experiences, including the reasons you became an educator. (100 words or fewer)

Journal

Define curriculum in your own words. How specifically does the curriculum influence how and what you teach? Do you have any flexibility in the content you teach or are you required to follow a scope and sequence? (100 words or fewer)

Note

Use CaseMail to send a note to your instructor stating that you will be taking this course. To do so, click on CaseMail on the top menu bar and then 'Click here to create a new message.' Use the marked link to look up an address. Continue linking down until you see the class list. Select the instructor's name and then compose your message and hit 'Post Message.'

Session 1

Using data to drive curriculum and instruction

Case

South Fayette High School

Readings

- Alignment of Curriculum and Tests to Standards
- Using Standards-Led Policy to Align Assessment and Accountability Systems
- Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Instruction

Discussion

In the case, Mary Ravita explains that a “data culture” in the school district has resulted in many curricular and instructional changes. Discuss the **consequences** of the use of data for teachers and students at South Fayette High School. What **issues** for staff development arise in such a culture? Debate the pros and cons of a standard curriculum and common assessments using **knowledge** from the readings as well as your own experiences.

Journal

Focus on the “Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Instruction” reading. Explain how No Child Left Behind has influenced teaching in your school and more specifically, in your classroom. What **issues** from the reading resonate most with you? What **actions** can you take to ensure that you are providing students with effective instruction and not simply “teaching to the test?”

Note

Check your CaseMail (linked from top menu bar) and News Flash (on the right when you login) for notes from your instructor every time you log on to the site.

Session 2

Focusing on the future with technology integration

Case

South Fayette High School

Readings

- Professional Development: 21st Century Models
- Research Implications for Preparing Teachers to Use Technology
- Performance Assessment
- Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants

Discussion

In the case, Brian O'Black indicates that one way to make learning meaningful for all students is to integrate technology into various aspects of the curriculum. Discuss the **issues** that arise for administrators and teachers in the district to make this goal a reality. Using **knowledge** from the readings, suggest types of staff development opportunities that would be most effective for teachers as they learn to use technology as a learning tool in their classrooms.

Journal

Identify the challenges digital immigrants may have when teaching digital natives. What **actions** (through curriculum or professional development) has your school or district taken to address these **issues**? Consider the parent **perspective** as you describe this occurrence in your school.