



Curriculum Redesign Update

In 2010, the Ministry of Education began the transformation of BC's K-12 education system. The document *Exploring Curriculum Design (January 2013)* described how the curriculum and assessment redesign processes differ from those of the past. Curriculum is being co-constructed, and development processes are open and transparent, giving stakeholders many opportunities to provide feedback at various points during development.

The Ministry is working closely with the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and other education partners to co-construct and redesign the curriculum. During development, team members have been encouraged to share curriculum draft materials with colleagues, and the BCTF has posted drafts on their website and listservs. Introducing such processes meant a new learning curve for all participants, but this has been a positive step in curriculum development, encouraging broader involvement.

As the transformation of curriculum continues, we are providing this update on where we are now, how the feedback process works, what we've heard so far, and what's next in curriculum and assessment.

Where We Are Now

As of the end of May 2014:

- draft curricula are posted for English Language Arts K-9, Mathematics K-9, Social Studies K-9, Science K-9, Arts Education K-8, and Physical and Health Education K-9, including French translations where applicable
- draft curricula for Français Langue Seconde – Immersion K-9 and Français Langue Première K-9 are in the final stages of editing and will be available for review soon
- draft competency profiles and student illustrations are posted for Communication, Creative Thinking, and Positive Personal and Cultural Identity

How the Feedback Process Works

To facilitate further refinement of the draft curricula, the Ministry is using several different methods to gather feedback. Students, teachers, administrators, parents, academics, stakeholders, and the public have provided feedback to the Ministry by:

- sending emails and summaries of feedback directly to the Ministry
- completing the electronic questionnaire on the new curriculum website (available at www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca)
- participating as schools and districts in focused in-depth reviews and sending summaries of their feedback
- expressing views through news media and social media

The BCTF has also collected feedback, which, when available, will be added to the information base for analysis.

What We've Heard

As of the end of May 2014, the Ministry's new curriculum website has received 134,742 visitors and 7,440,447 web page views. Through the electronic questionnaire on the website, we received responses from groups and individuals representing about 885 people, and we have received approximately 300 emails directly from individuals and groups about the curriculum redesign. In addition, the Ministry coordinated 16 in-depth reviews throughout the province involving over 400 participants.

Overall Response

Feedback about the curriculum drafts has overall been encouraging with most respondents offering support for the transformation efforts as well as posing some questions for consideration. Of those questions posed most identify some areas to consider for refinement such as greater specificity or changes in content.

Positive themes emerging from the feedback

Respondents generally expressed support for the redesign and the key elements, such as big ideas and core competencies. They also supported other aspects of the transformation.

1. Greater choice and flexibility within the new curricula because of the less prescriptive nature of the learning standards
2. Promotion of more inquiry-based learning and more innovative approaches to education
3. Opportunities for greater personalizing of learning
4. More possibilities for interdisciplinary learning
5. Recognition of the importance of Arts Education and the potential to approach it either in an integrated way or by discipline
6. Explicit inclusion of important themes and topics:
 - Aboriginal world views
 - multiple perspectives such as those of First Nations and other cultural groups in Social Studies
 - financial literacy in Mathematics

Questions emerging from the feedback

Respondents identified concerns about coverage of topics and the need for supporting materials.

1. Have we achieved the right balance between flexibility and specificity?
 - ecological understandings (i.e., environmental education, ecological literacy, sustainability)
 - some topics may have become too broad, with not enough detail for the concepts and content
 - too many concepts/too much content are included at some grade levels
2. Do we need to outline expectations on how curriculum should be delivered?
 - mathematical foundations
3. Have we achieved the right level of inclusion of First Peoples representation in all curricular areas?
4. How should we deal with supporting materials?
 - interdisciplinary examples to show the potential of cross-curricular connections
 - examples and supporting materials for teachers in multi-grade classrooms
 - assessment guidelines and supports

What's Next

Changes to the curriculum drafts will be based on the feedback, including addressing the major themes identified above. The Ministry will facilitate the revision process, which will involve the teachers appointed by the BCTF, independent school teachers, school and district administrators, and other educators. In turn, the feedback may necessitate further reviews, such as cross-curricular reviews across the grades and reviews to identify how to better support multi-grade classrooms.

The development of examples of various ways of organizing for learning and inquiry should come from the promising practices of BC classroom teachers. To this end, the Ministry will identify a process to solicit authentic classroom examples.

There is still a great deal of work to do and we will be focussing on a number of continuing and new activities during the 2014/15 school year.

Summer 2014 Activities

- more draft curricular areas posted as they become available
- continuing to review and analyze the feedback and acting on those findings in the fall of 2014

Fall/Winter 2014 Activities

- further developing some areas of learning in K–9
- teams of BC teachers revising existing drafts based on the feedback received
- develop a graduation curriculum (10-12) prototype for review and public feedback
- creating a consultation process and framework for applied skills
- determining the appropriate location of careers within the curriculum

Winter/Spring 2015 Activities

- promote trial runs of the curriculum by classroom teachers
- beginning the work on curriculum for the graduation years during the 2014/15 school year, in conjunction with work underway on a new graduation program
- continuing the development of core competencies

Assessment Update

Changing emphases in curriculum will require changes to all forms of assessment.

Classroom assessment: Consultations with BC educators and the public determined that student learning needs to be communicated to parents in more meaningful ways. Assessment and reporting guidelines are emerging from promising practices, and new draft policies will be developed for review and feedback in the fall/winter.

Provincial assessment: Provincial assessment will remain vital to measuring student progress, but the tools will need to adapt to the changes in curriculum. An advisory group was formed in spring 2013 to identify the key principles that should guide potential changes to provincial assessment. More information will be provided regarding these directions and developments in the 2014/15 school year.