

Curriculum Upgrade Review Process

The goal for conducting curriculum upgrade reviews is to provide a safe collaborative environment to share generated upgrades and receive helpful feedback and suggestions for refining one's ideas.

Assign three to four members to a review team. There are two phases to conducting a curriculum-upgrade review:

- **Phase One:** Each team member individually (and privately) reads and reviews the predesignated small-group team's collection of upgrades* and records personal thoughts *before* meeting as a team.
- **Phase Two:** The small-group team meets to participate in collaborative dialogue based on the collection of upgrades and accompanying commentaries.

**Each member needs to include a brief summary regarding his/her/their upgrade lens(es), focus(es), and other predetermined requisites in a collaborative upgrade document to inform members in preparation for reviewing on another's documents in Phase One.*

Phase One

Prior to beginning Phase One, the appropriate number of upgrade-document (e.g., unit of study, lesson series, assessment task) copies need to be made for reviewers (one copy for each team member), either in print or via shared access with the ability to make a personal copy.

During Phase One, each team member reads through all of the provided upgrade documents with a threefold lens: *positives*, *needed clarifications*, and *concerns* based on the designer's shared upgrade lens(es), focus(es) and any additional predetermined requisites.

Reviewers may choose to use three highlight colors when reading each document to aid in preparing to provide feedback to team members:

- one color for **positives**
- second color for **needed clarifications**
- third color for **concerns**

The amount of time to complete Phase One may vary due to the number of team members and complexities of the upgrades.

Phase Two

The Phase Two review meeting should take approximately 1 to 1-1/2 hours, if there are no more than four members per review team, and assuming that all of the team members have completed Phase One beforehand.

Step One: Role Identification (1-2 Minutes)

Team members sit in a cooperative-style arrangement (e.g., around a circular or rectangular table) and identify four roles: (first) **Facilitator**, (first) **Timekeeper**, (first) **Parking Lot Attendant**, and (first) **Presenter**. *Note: each team member will have the opportunity to take on each role during the review meeting.* After each Presenter's allotted time (Step Two - Step Four), quickly switch roles and begin with the next Presenter's upgrade-document feedback.

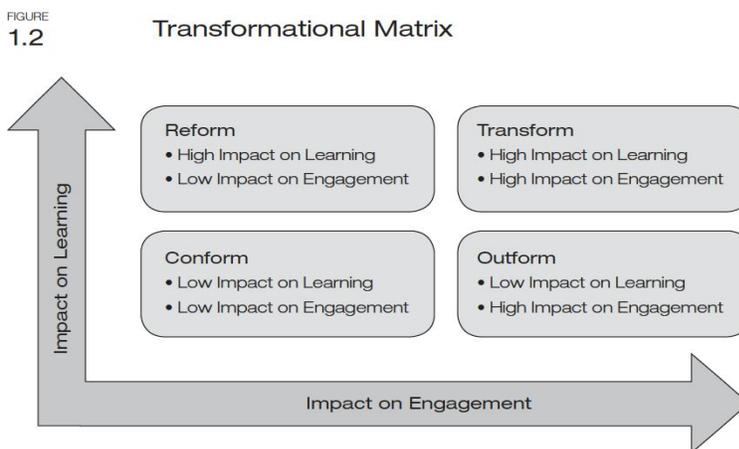
Because everyone deserves equal feedback time, plan on approximately 5–10 minutes per Presenter. The Parking Lot Attendant's role is to stop any conversations that stray from the goal of the upgrade review. For example, if a conversation begins about an off-task topic, the Parking Lot Attendant literally calls out, "Parking lot!" This person makes note of the mentioned concern(s). *At the end of the entire meeting time, the Parking Lot Attendants' notes may be addressed immediately or can be included in a future meeting with the appropriate people in attendance.* The Facilitator immediately refocuses the group and discussion continues focused on the current Presenter's upgrade document. The Timekeeper keeps track of "how much time remains" when reviewing a particular document to ensure equal time for all the Presenters.

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Step Two: Presenter’s Initial Sharing (Up to 5 Minutes)

Current Presenter describes strategic upgrade-document lens(es) and focus(es) to team members in more detail than what was included in the Phase One summary. For example, additional information may include details concerning:

- entry point(s) (e.g., Performance or Transfer Task, Instructional Innovation, Culminating Experience)
- 21st Century Clarification(s) (e.g., Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Global, Local, or Glocal Connections)
- authentic application of technology or web/device-based tools
- standards-related focus(es): alignment, instructional shifts, College and Career Readiness ELA Capacities or Standards for Mathematical Practice
- students “owning their own learning” through meaningful engagement versus compliant learning, and authentic evidence of learning
- perception of where upgrade “lives” in Transformational Matrix



Hale, J. A. & Fisher M. (2013) *Upgrade Your Curriculum: Practical Ways to Transform Units and Engage Students*. ASCD. (Page 13)

Step Three: Reviewers’ Feedback for Current Presenter (Up to 10 Minutes)

Each reviewer shares his or her feedback notations for current Presenter—starting with everyone’s *positives*—followed by *needed clarifications* and *concerns* using appropriate warm or cool feedback strategies* related to the Presenter’s upgrade. If necessary, the Facilitator helps team members elaborate on a particular point, or asks a question that leads the conversation toward *actionable* feedback for the current Presenter. Presenter needs time to respond to clarifications and concerns, as well as take personal notes about comments shared.

*Potential Warm and Cool Feedback Strategies

| Warm Feedback | Cool Feedback |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on the strengths of the work • supports the work being shared using <i>precise language</i> rather than generic praise • highlights specifics of the work using phrases such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>I connected to your ideas when you described...</i> ○ <i>I found _____ interesting and liked how it related to _____...</i> ○ <i>I am particularly interested in your description of...</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on the work and not the person • offers constructive criticism <i>with potential solutions</i> or a <i>different perspective</i> • asks for clarifications by asking questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Did you consider trying...?</i> ○ <i>Can you help me see the connection between “x” and “y?” (e.g., “x” may be skills or standards, while “y” could be instructional actions or assessments)</i> ○ <i>I wonder what would happen if you...?</i> |

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Step Four: Current Presenter's Reflection (Up to 5 Minutes)

Current Presenter orally shares his or her written notes with team members that he or she noted during Step Three's feedback time, asking for any final clarifications that may still be unclear to the current Presenter.

Step Five: Team Member Action Planning (Up to 10 Minutes)

After every team member has had an opportunity to be a current Presenter, each team member creates a personal action plan that outlines:

- a personalized **goal** based on his or her planned upgrade implementation
- a **procedure for achieving** that goal
- a definition for what **success will look like** when reaching the goal (e.g., SMART goal, sketchnote documentation)

Each team member then shares his or her personal action plan with the rest of the team for future accountability and implementation reflection.

Step Six: Final Team Reflections (Up to 10 Minutes)

Someone willing to act as final Facilitator asks for team reflections or comments based on the overall review process to share with other teams in a large-group debrief or shared virtually. Here are a few potential questions that may be asked during this reflection time:

- How has listening closely to other team members share their upgrades helped you with your upgrade?
- What might you suggest to encourage others to continue participating collaboratively in curriculum upgrade reviews based on your personal experience?
- Creating 21st century learning environments is not an option; it is an imperative. How might upgrading curriculum *one unit at a time* transform your personal and/or collaborative learning and teaching concerning modern learning?



Considerations for Forming the Pre-planned Review Teams

Divide team members into predetermined small-group teams based on the following criteria:

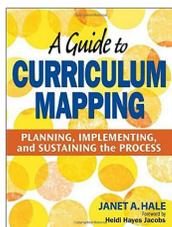
- Break up cliques and naysayers.
- Include a variety of grade levels and discipline areas per team.
- Consider the emotional dynamics of each team's members.

Curriculum Upgrades and Feedback Supportive Tools

- ASCD Archived Webinar: [Upgrade Your Curriculum](#) (2013)
- [Upgrade Your Curriculum LiveBinder](#)
- [Upgrade Your Curriculum Group](#) on ASCD EDge (ASCD's Social Network for Educators)
- Eduplanet 21's Learning Path associated with Upgrade Your Curriculum: [One Step at a Time - Contemporary Approaches to Promote Engagement and Learning](#)
- [Upgrade Your Curriculum](#) book (ASCD Web site)

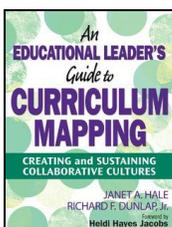
The *Curriculum Upgrade Review Process* includes influences from the work of Giselle Martin-Kniep, Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Michael Fisher, and Janet Hale. Photo credit: Janet Hale

Additional Professional Development Resources from Michael and Janet:



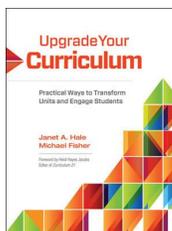
A Guide to Curriculum Mapping: Planning, Implementing, and Sustaining the Process

While curriculum mapping is recognized as a highly effective method for serving students' ongoing instructional needs and creating systemic change, the means for putting this data-based decision-making process into practice may not always be clearly understood. This in-depth resource speaks to teachers and administrators with varying levels of curriculum-mapping experience and describes how teacher groups drive the process by engaging in collaborative inquiry as they review one another's curriculums for gaps, redundancies, and new learning. Available from www.corwin.com



An Educational Leader's Guide to Curriculum Mapping: Creating and Sustaining Collaborative Cultures

This book provides administrators with the foundational understandings and specific guidance and strategies to effectively support a curriculum mapping initiative in their schools and districts. The authors discuss administrative leadership for curriculum mapping, including the roles and responsibilities of various administrative positions, such as the superintendent, principal, and curriculum director, and provide protocols and procedures for writing administrative maps. Available from www.corwin.com



Upgrade Your Curriculum: Practical Ways to Transform Units and Engage Students

Because mandates alone aren't going to help your school implement new curriculum standards, you need this book's plan for empowering and enabling teachers to successfully upgrade units of study. Inspired by the best-selling book *Curriculum 21: Essential Education for a Changing World*, edited by renowned curriculum expert Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Janet Hale and Michael Fisher describe how to upgrade curriculum to embrace modern-learning environments that engage students in higher-order thinking tasks, make local and global connections, and incorporate appropriate technology. Available from www.ascd.org



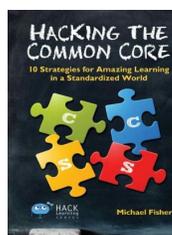
Ditch the Daily Lesson Plan: How do I plan for meaningful student learning?

In this engaging guide, curriculum expert Mike Fisher outfits you with fresh and provocative ideas on how to "ditch" the daily lesson plan while advancing student learning. Discover how plan smarter to save time by combining existing lesson plans into learning checkpoints with emphasis on building background knowledge and formative assessment, transforming existing curriculum maps into deep learning experiences with opportunities for scaffolding and extensions, and developing new open learning plans that align standards, skills, tasks, and assessments in a more efficient and student-centered way. Available from www.ascd.org



Digital Learning Strategies: How do I assign and assess 21st Century Work?

Students can now demonstrate their learning by using apps and online resources to conduct research, solicit feedback, and collaborate with others more effectively than ever before. Digital tools also provide teachers with effective ways to assess student work. Michael Fisher outfits you for this new world by opening your thinking to new possibilities for teaching and engaging 21st century students. Available from www.ascd.org



Hacking the Common Core: 10 Strategies for Amazing Learning in a Standardized World

It's finally here: a book that unravels the Common Core State Standards, exposes the myths, and shows educators and parents exactly how to bring back the fun to teaching and learning—even in a standardized world. In *Hacking the Common Core*, longtime teacher and CCSS specialist, Michael Fisher, reveals 10 amazing hacks for teaching the Core in all subjects. Available from www.hacklearning.org, as well as Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.