



# Watervliet City School: Curriculum Alignment

The Why, How and When of Mapping

*Presented by the Curriculum Alignment Sub-Committee*



# Why Map?

- ◆ Research has shown that districts that have good curriculum ---curriculum that is aligned to the NYS standards and used regularly by all teachers, have a better academic success rate for students. (Report from University at Albany- What Makes Middle Schools Work, 2007)



# What is curriculum mapping?

- ◆ Calendar-based curriculum mapping is a procedure for collecting and maintaining a data base of the operational curriculum in a school and/or district.
- ◆ It provides the basis for authentic examination of the data base. (Student performance)
- ◆ The map provides a “frame work” for instruction.



# Curriculum Mapping is a Process

- ◆ Curriculum mapping is on going
- ◆ Can be viewed in real –time using MapSter
- ◆ Allows other teachers/grade levels to see what is happening at other levels so they can plan more effectively
- ◆ Mapping is improving the old way of communication
- ◆ Is continuously reviewed & adjusted to meet the current needs of our students.



# Who is mapping?

- ◆ Mapping is occurring locally, nationally, and internationally.
- ◆ The computer has changed curriculum mapping, by making it easy for everyone to have a living, breathing document at their finger tips.
- ◆ Teachers share their maps electronically not only in our school, but regionally, nationally and globally.
- ◆ Maps are shared within your grade level/department as well as throughout the district and many schools also share them with parents and students. This is our goal.




# Why is the Watervliet School District Mapping???

- ◆ Last year the middle school was labeled SINI-1 for ELA- sub group students with disabilities
- ◆ In March of 2007, the SINI Steering Committee was developed and one of their first tasks was to review data. The committee decided that a strong foundation set in ELA (and math) beginning at the k level would be one of the best ways to insure student achievement over time in not only those areas, but in every curriculum area.



## Why....continued

- ◆ To make sure we had appropriately aligned curriculum to the NYS standards, the district began the curriculum mapping process.
- ◆ “A strong curriculum is the foundation for strong teaching and learning.” (H. Lynn Erickson)



# In the Summer of 2007 mapping began...

- ◆ In order to ensure that we are all on the same page and teaching what we should be teaching, when we should be teaching it, the district began an alignment program starting with our most serious areas of need ELA and Math K-9.
- ◆ 28 teachers plus administrators and a consultant worked for 8 half days on Phase 1 (beginning the master map) and Phase 2 (alignment to the NYS standards).



In the Fall of 2007 district wide mapping continued....

- ◆ On the September conference day, K-6 met by grade levels to get consensus (PHASE 3) over what was in the map and to ensure all the standards were there at the right time. In October, K-6 looked vertically for alignment, as well as to identify gaps, overlaps and extra laps. (PHASE 4) In November/December K-6 teachers began reviewing data (PHASE 5) during grade level meetings to identify areas where students were struggling.



# In the Fall of 2007 district wide mapping continued....

- ◆ 7-9 (fewer teachers) reviewed for alignment to standards (PHASE 2), had consensus (PHASE 3), and met with their departments to review vertically (PHASE 4) over the summer. On the Sept/Oct conference days, grade 7-9 teachers began reviewing data and adjusting maps based on student needs. (PHASE 5)
- ◆ All other pre-k –12 teachers began PHASE 1 of the mapping process in the fall- their goal was to write down what content they taught and when it was taught in the school year calendar.

# The Watervliet Curriculum

## Mapping Process:

- ◆ PHASE 1: Collecting the data (Putting the content, skills and assessments into a map)
- ◆ PHASE 2: Align content to the NYS standards.
- ◆ PHASE 3: First read through (Sharing your map with others/grade level (Horizontal) and adjusting in MapSter where necessary). This is often called consensus building—to make sure there is agreement on what and when we teach content but not necessarily that everyone will teach it the same way.
- ◆ PHASE 4: 2<sup>nd</sup> Read through (Sharing your map Across grade level (Vertical) and adjusting in MapSter where necessary)





## The process continued...

- ◆ PHASE 5: Review data. (Determine if additional revisions need to occur based on student performance and adjust in MapSter where necessary.)
- ◆ PHASE 6: Review & revise maps. (Re-look at Essential Questions- Are they engaging and appropriate? Incorporate a “concept” into the content area. Ensure that the listed skills correspond to specific assessments.)



# The process continued...

- ◆ PHASE 7: Mixed group review of maps to assess clarity. (This is not an evaluation of the map makers!) Mixed groups may consist of administrators, teachers & support staff across grade levels/buildings. (To be phased in '08-'09)
- ◆ PHASE 8: End of year reflection (Grade levels meet to review the map: pacing, content, skills, assessment and adjust based on student need in MapSter as necessary.)
- ◆ PHASE 9: Preparation for next year and the Diary Map.




# Working with the Map...

- ◆ Anyone, can review, copy, or edit their map at anytime. Maps are meant to reflect what content you teach and how you teach it. If you want to reflect on a content area after teaching it, you may enter a comment in the “notes” section at the end of each month. (I.e. “Teaching fractions took a week longer than expected.” or “ Need to find a more engaging way to teach metaphors.”)



Quote from Dr. H. Hayes Jacobs' book,  
*Getting Results with Curriculum Mapping*

- ◆ “Primarily, mapping enables teachers to identify gaps, redundancies, and misalignments in the curriculum and instructional program and to foster dialogue among teachers about their work.”  
“...however, curriculum mapping is ultimately targeted to the outcomes of measurable improvements in student performance...and...a process for ongoing curriculum and assessment review.” (pg vi)



# Plausible Time Frames for an initial/basic draft of a map (PHASE 1)

- ◆ Elementary- Approximately 1 hour for content, 2-3 hours for skills and assessment per course
- ◆ Secondary- Approximately 45 minutes for content, 2 hours for skills and assessments per prep.

(H. Hayes Jacobs, Mapping Workshop)



# Types of Maps

- ◆ Master Map/Consensus Map: maps that house the aligned curriculum and the agreed upon content, skills and assessments for each subject area/grade level
- ◆ Diary Maps: teacher's day to day maps of what really happens in their class; details  
In the future, may serve as your lesson plans.



# Areas on your map:

- ◆ Month -Add the number of weeks you anticipate the content to take. I.e. (September-4 weeks).
- ◆ Essential Questions- Essential questions embed the concept into an interrogative form. Thus the learner is set onto a path of inquiry. Reflecting the big idea. Limit to one or 2 big questions with up to five small ones. These are the curriculum “chapters”. Make them interesting to capture the students’ attention. {These are for the students. The students should be able to answer/discuss this. }



# Example of Essential Questions

- ◆ Plausible EQ for Social 8

“Why did the US have a Civil War?”

Better EQ: “Is the US still having a Civil War?”

- ◆ Plausible EQ for ELA

“What is a fairy tale?”

Better EQ: “What do fairy tales tell us about the culture of the country?” “How does the point of view of the writer affect the story?”



# Areas on your map continued....

- ◆ **CONTENT:** The subject matter itself; key concepts, facts, events, which may be presented within a map in three formats:
  - Discipline-based
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Student Centered

Add the “Concept” in the first sentence. {This should answer what the essential question is asking. This is for the teacher. }



# Example of Content

- ◆ English 9 Unit The Individual vs. Society

- ◆ Content:

(**Concept:** There is a direct relationship between societal values and structures and the role of the individual in a society.)

Major Text: *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell

Historical contexts/roots from Soviet/ communism

Contemporary models of: political cartoons,  
newspaper editorials, graphs, etc.

PBS video- “The Legacy of Stalin”



## Areas on your map continued....

- ◆ Skills- These are the actions that you will take and should reflect the standards. More than five skills might prove difficult to master.
- ◆ Activities that would use the skills should be listed in the area. i.e. Skill/activity, skill/activity, etc.



# Skills are displayed on map as:

- ◆ Precise skills that can be:

- ⇒ Assessed/measured

- ⇒ Observed

- ⇒ Described in specific terms

- \*Skill are action verbs

# Precision expectation is crucial to skill development

- ◆ THE COACH DOESN'T SAY: “We’re working on critical playing skills today.”
- ◆ THE COACH DOES SAY: “We’re working on passing.”



# Another example...

- ◆ Teacher doesn't say:  
“We're working on reading today.”

Teacher says:

“We are working on our decoding skills today.”





## Areas on your map continued....

- ◆ Assessments- this is a demonstration of learning and takes the form of a tangible product or a performance. It is a noun. It should match the listed skills. Assessment listed as a “quiz” is not succinct. Could be a 10 item multiple choice quiz or a two paragraph constructed response quiz.



# Examples of Assessments

- ◆ Assessment of work by student rubric and teacher rubric
- ◆ Observation of literature circles with observer notes or assessment checklist
- ◆ Use of manipulatives to solve problems (observer notes)
- ◆ Entries in a journal
- ◆ Ad campaign
- ◆ Topic quiz



# Review

- ◆ Content is the subject matter, key concepts, facts, topics, important information
- ◆ Skills are the targeted proficiencies, technical actions and strategies
- ◆ Assessment is the demonstration of learning; products and performances used as evidence of skill development and content understanding



Maps are.....

## A TOOL FOR TEACHERS

- ◆ Blueprints for teaching--educators should be able to read and understand each others maps in and outside their own content area
- ◆ Avoid vague maps as they cannot be understood or replicated
- ◆ Similar terminology should be used
- ◆ Are a way for everyone to communicate with each other (NO MORE DUSTY BINDERS!)
- ◆ A way to help students perform better! (A path to lead us off the SINI list!)



# Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Educator and Curriculum Mapping Expert

- ◆ The Watervliet City School District is using the Heidi Hayes Jacobs' methodology as the basis for our curriculum mapping design.
- ◆ Dr. Jacobs is considered by most to be the pioneer in this process. She has been speaking and writing about it for over 30 year.
- ◆ For additional information on mapping [www.curriculumdesigners.com](http://www.curriculumdesigners.com)