



Kentucky Department of
E D U C A T I O N

Curriculum Development Process:
Phase 2





Phase 2: Articulate Instructional Vision

An in-depth understanding of the *Kentucky Academic Standards* and of what makes them unique is vital when crafting a vision for teaching and learning in a content area, as is familiarity with relevant research. Districts must also have an accurate sense, derived from local data and input, of their particular educational context. Together these provide curriculum teams an ongoing point of reference for fashioning an instructional vision that can guide them throughout the development and implementation process.

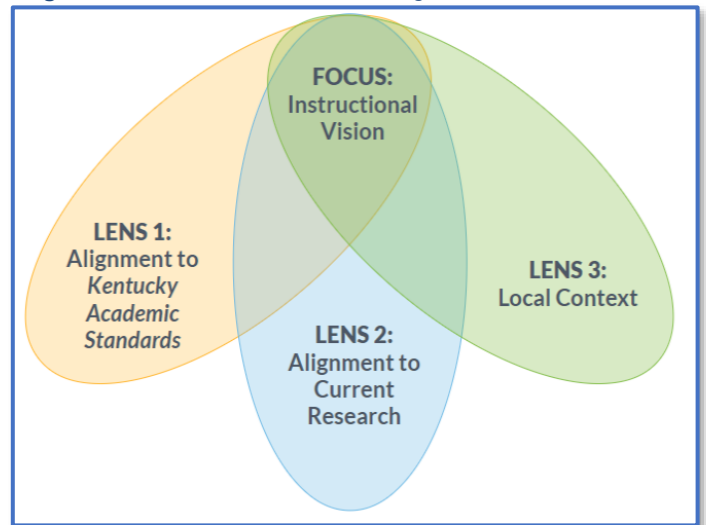
Step 1: Analyze KAS, Content-Area Research and Local Needs

In order to create a strong local instructional vision, the district curriculum team must first spend time establishing a shared understanding of the subject area content, skills and pedagogy prior to development/revision of the curriculum. Figure 2.3 highlights the three lenses districts should focus on to build this shared understanding: (1) the *Kentucky Academic Standards*, (2) current research for teaching and learning and (3) the local context. All three lenses work to support a common vision focused on improving student outcomes and guide school and district-level decision-making.

The curriculum team should start with analyzing the *KAS* document itself, both its overall architecture and its critical components. “The Writer’s Vision Statement” and “Design Considerations” sections will help the team gain an understanding of the foundational beliefs that guided standards development and the design considerations of the specific components within the standards document. Standards progressions analysis will help the team gain a better understanding of the student experiences over time, both within a course and across K-12.

The curriculum team should also spend time deepening their understanding of research-based best practices and approach to teaching and learning in the content area of focus. This might include resources from kystandards.org, content-specific national and professional organizations, as well as educational experts in the respective subject area.

Figure 2.3. Three Lenses for Creating an Instructional Vision



*Adapted from Achievement Network



Local instructional priorities (e.g., portrait of a learner, project-based learning, cooperative learning, workshop model, standards-based grading), data and needs assessments should also be examined to refine the team’s sense of local context.

Key Questions

- **Lens 1 (Alignment to the Standards) Considerations:**
 - What foundational beliefs from the *KAS* should drive local implementation of the standards?
 - What impacts might these standards and foundational beliefs have on classroom instruction and assessment?
 - How do components within the standards document help educators gain clarity on what students need to know and be able to do to meet grade-level expectations?
 - What does analysis of the standards progression(s) reveal about the student experience at grade level and across K-12?
- **Lens 2 (Alignment to Current Research) Considerations:**
 - What current research on teaching and learning in the content area of focus might support developing shared understanding of the subject area content, skills and pedagogy?
- **Lens 3 (Local Context) Considerations:**
 - What possible sources of data (student demographics, unique learning needs/gaps, cultural values/connections, district initiatives and pedagogical practices, etc.) might be used to develop understanding of the local context?

Key Tool(s)

- Content-Specific Team Analysis Resources
 - [Mathematics Team Analysis Resources](#)
 - [Reading and Writing Team Analysis Resources](#)
 - [Science Team Analysis Resources](#)
- [Team Analysis Planning Template](#)

Step 2: Articulate K-12 Instructional Vision

With a shared understanding of the depth and rigor of the standards, a common view of content pedagogy grounded in current research, and an understanding of the needs of the local context, the curriculum team develops an instructional vision of teaching and learning for that content area. The vision is more than what the school or district thinks should be happening in individual classrooms. The instructional vision describes the school or district’s “instructional aspirations and articulates what teaching and learning look like in the content area” (EdReports, 2021).



In formulating the instructional vision, the curriculum team identifies the core beliefs that will be the foundation for their work. These core beliefs should include content-specific beliefs as well as beliefs about students (i.e., all students are capable of high-quality work and deeper learning) and the student experience. A set of belief statements can then be elaborated to show what they might entail for various role groups and the outcomes they will produce.

Once the team has articulated the instructional vision in a way that is clear and easily understood by all stakeholders, **school/district leaders should seek stakeholder feedback and determine how they will incorporate the feedback into a revised draft.** That revised draft should drive the rest of the curriculum development and be a touchstone the team can return to throughout the process, refining when appropriate.

Key Questions

- **Instructional Vision Considerations:**
 - How well do the belief statements reflect alignment to the *KAS*, current research for teaching and learning in the content area and our local context?
 - What would our belief statements “look like in action” at the district, school and classroom levels? What roles and responsibilities would follow from them? What might be their observable indicators?
 - How well does the initial instructional vision represent an ideal state of teaching and learning in the content area? What revisions might increase alignment?
- **Stakeholder Inclusion:**
 - How will we communicate the draft of our instructional vision for the content area in a way that is clear and easily understood by all stakeholders?
 - How will stakeholders provide input and feedback, and how will that be used to inform the instructional vision?

Key Tool(s)

- [Sample Instructional Vision from Kentucky Districts](#)
- [Communication Plan Template \(Phase 2\)](#)



Reference

EdReports. (2021). *Selecting for quality: 6 key adoption steps*. Retrieved from <https://www.edreports.org/resources/adoption-steps>

