



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

Curriculum Development Process:
Phase 4

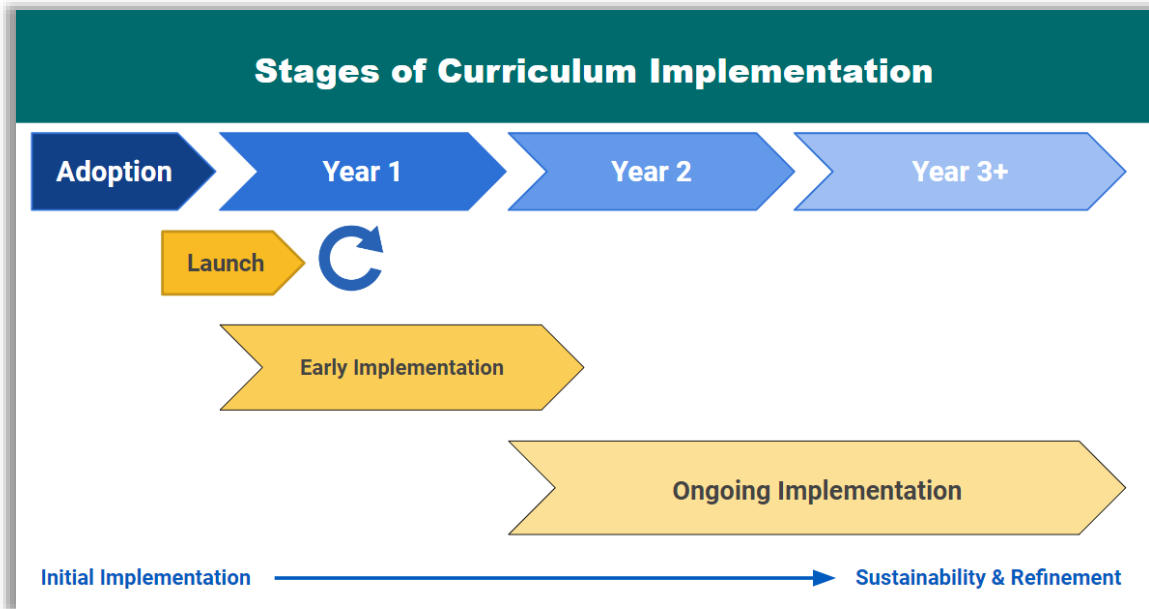




Phase 4: Implement and Monitor the Curriculum

Effective implementation of a local curriculum and supporting HQIRs is an ongoing process typically requiring 3-5 years to reach a point of refinement and established sustainability. The KDE has identified three critical stages, shown in Figure 2.4, of curriculum implementation: **Launch, Early Implementation** and **Ongoing Implementation**.

Figure 2.4: Stages of Curriculum Implementation



*Adapted from [Rivet Education](#)

Although all role groups contribute to effective implementation across its three stages, **research confirms district and school leadership play a vital part in ensuring an adopted curriculum and instructional resource(s) improve student outcomes**. Based on a review of the research, the Wallace Foundation (2021) states leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors that can impact student learning. For a district or school to make the instructional vision a reality in all classrooms, there must be a sustained commitment and focus from leaders at all levels of the system.

[The Curriculum Implementation Framework](#) outlines roles and responsibilities aligned to each of the three stages of implementation, highlighting how leadership creates the enabling conditions for the actions of other role groups. While the framework outlines unique aspects within each stage, it also embodies **four core actions** district and school leaders should take each year to support successful implementation of a locally developed curriculum and its instructional resources:



- **Set Implementation Goals and Develop an Aligned Monitoring Plan** – Establish clear goals each year strategically targeting aspects of effective curriculum implementation and develop aligned monitoring plan to measure progress.
- **Provide Ongoing Professional Learning** – Provide leaders, core teachers, special education teachers (co-teachers and resource teachers), support specialists (e.g., interventionists, English learner) and others in the system with curriculum-based professional learning appropriate to each stage of implementation.
- **Gather Data to Monitor Progress** – Gather quantitative and qualitative data to measure progress towards the implementation goals.
- **Analyze Data and Make Adjustments** – Analyze data to determine progress towards the goals, identify key successes, learn from and solve for significant challenges, and make adjustments to the implementation plan.

Figure 2.5. Curriculum Implementation Cycle



The key actions listed above allow school and district leaders to work in a cycle of continuous improvement, as shown in Figure 2.5. Each year of implementation, leaders repeat these actions as they move closer to the district’s instructional vision for teaching and learning in the content area. Two helpful resources that can guide Kentucky districts in this work include:

- [Continuous Improvement Playbook for Curriculum Implementation](#) -Provides eight action steps for year-over-year planning that can be followed across the stages of implementation; and
- [Curriculum Implementation Monitoring Toolkit](#) – Describes six key aspects of an implementation ecosystem along with associated tools to support monitoring.

Step 1: Set Implementation Goals and Develop Aligned Monitoring Plan

To support the vision that the intended curriculum truly becomes the implemented curriculum, district and school leaders need to **set 2-3 clear goals each year** targeting specific aspects of effective curriculum/HQIR implementation aligned to (1) identified areas of need based on current data/evidence of implementation, and (2) the stage of implementation and input gathered from stakeholders.

After determining each year’s implementation goals, district and school leaders should develop a monitoring plan. The plan should clearly define what data will be collected to provide



evidence aligned to each goal to ensure targeted aspects of the implementation “ecosystem” are functioning effectively, leading to improved student experience and outcomes.

When developing the monitoring plan, consider the person(s) responsible for collecting evidence as well as those responsible for analyzing data. Finally, consider how often data will be analyzed in order to make decisions in a timely manner regarding adjustments and/or supports needed to ensure effective implementation of the curriculum.

Key Questions

- **Implementation Goal Setting Considerations:**
 - Based on current evidence and the stage of implementation, what are our 2-3 goals for the upcoming year?
- **Aligned Monitoring Plan Considerations:**
 - For each goal, which metric will we measure and what tool will we use to measure it?
 - Operationally, what needs to happen to gather this data? Who is responsible?
 - When will we step back to review our progress toward our goals holistically? Who will be a part of these stepbacks? (Instruction Partners, 2019)
- **Stakeholder Inclusion:**
 - How will we gather feedback from staff to help inform our implementation goals and aligned monitoring plan?
 - How will we communicate our goals for effective implementation and plans for monitoring progress toward them?

Key Tool(s)

- [Curriculum Implementation Monitoring Toolkit](#)
- [Setting Implementation Goals and Developing Aligned Monitoring Plan](#)
- [Sample Implementation Goals](#)
- [Communication Plan Template \(Phase 4\)](#)

Step 2: Provide Ongoing Professional Learning

Simply providing educators (leaders, core teachers, special education teachers and support specialists) with a curriculum and HQIR without also providing them aligned professional learning focused on **how** to implement those resources effectively to meet the needs of all students will not impact student achievement (Short & Hirsh, 2023; Blazar, D., Heller, B., Kane, T., Polikoff, M., Staiger, D., Carrell, S...& Kurlaender, M., 2019; Instruction Partners, 2019).

Educators need professional learning that deepens understanding of what to teach, improves content knowledge and pedagogy through exploring how best to teach it and facilitates transfer by being connected to the curriculum used in classrooms (Rivet, 2020). This need,



now recognized in the field, has resulted in beginning to establish high-quality professional learning that is curriculum based.

Curriculum-based professional learning (CBPL) supports districts as they move through the stages of implementation, from gaining an initial understanding of the curriculum and HQIR, to arriving at a fuller, more nuanced understanding and making informed adjustments to the HQIR as implementation progresses. The three critical stages of implementation identified above correspond to three stages of curriculum-based professional learning to support teachers (core special education and support specialists) and leaders in moving toward refinement and established sustainability: **Launch PL**, **Early Implementation PL** and **Ongoing PL**.

- **Launch PL** – Occurs in spring/summer prior to the first year of implementation and is designed to develop initial understanding of the new curriculum and HQIR, its overall design, and the instructional shifts it represents. To help build initial understanding, educators are introduced to [intellectual preparation](#), beginning with unit internalization.
- **Early Implementation PL** – Occurs during the first year of implementation, possibly extending into year two, and is designed to provide collaborative PL opportunities that begin to deepen understanding of the curriculum and what is required for effective implementation (e.g., introducing remaining intellectual preparation processes, experiencing lessons as students, analyzing models of effective practice).
- **Ongoing Implementation PL** – often begins at some point in year two, continuing throughout successive years of implementation and is designed to deepen understanding of how to integrate HQIRs more skillfully into regular practice and make smart adjustments to help meet the needs of all learners (e.g., continue engaging in cycles of intellectual preparation, coaching, classroom observations and feedback).

Each year of implementation, district and school leaders identify professional learning needs aligned to a particular stage of implementation. Once professional learning needs are identified, the next step is to develop a professional learning plan. Leaders should prioritize identified areas of need to decide where to begin the work and then determine which funds will be used to support the professional learning, who will facilitate it, how facilitators will be trained and possible timelines for completion. Most high-quality instructional resources come with tools and/or trainings to support implementation, and districts may also consider partnering with the HQIR vendor or an external PL provider. In addition, the KDE's [Curriculum-Based Professional Learning Guidance Document](#) contains key ideas, questions and protocols specifically aligned to each stage.

Key Questions

- **Yearly PL Plan Considerations:**



- What are the specific PL needs aligned to the implementation goals and the stage of implementation?
- What structures will be used to provide the PL?
- What are the potential focuses and outcomes of the PL?
- How will training be differentiated (over time and according to varying needs)?
- What is the target date/time frame?
- Who will be responsible for providing the PL?
- What funding will be used?
- How will the school/district know if participants have mastered the professional learning objectives, and what data will be collected at the end of each session? (Instruction Partners, 2019)
- **Stakeholder Inclusion:**
 - How will input be gathered from staff to help determine possible areas of professional learning needed to support effective implementation?
 - How will leaders ensure consistent communication about how the PL plan each year aligns to the instructional vision? How will they address questions as they arise?

Key Tool(s)

- [Professional Learning Plan Template](#)
- [Communication Plan Template \(Phase 4\)](#)
- [Curriculum-Based Professional Learning Guidance Document](#)

Step 3: Gather Data to Monitor Progress

The purpose of this step is to gather data aligned to the yearly goals targeting specific aspects of implementation outlined in the monitoring plan to determine what is working, what is not working and what needs to be adjusted. **While these aspects will not afford analysis of the entire implementation “ecosystem,” triangulation of the data can provide information to identify where aspects of implementation are likely contributing to positive impacts on the student experience and outcomes, and where adjustments may be needed.**

While school or district leaders should meet quarterly to make large adjustments, quick check-ins more regularly can support leadership teams in progress monitoring and allow for quick problem solving and adjustments in the implementation plan. Leaders also may spend time as a PLC analyzing data at various times throughout the school year to identify school and district trends. As teachers work collaboratively through the PLC process, analyzing data from curriculum-embedded assessments, they are able to continually monitor student learning.

Key Questions

- How are things going across our implementation plan?



- What bright spots and exemplary practices can we celebrate and share?
- Where are we having challenges?
- What are we hearing and what questions are we getting?
- What concerns can we address easily? What concerns are more challenging?
- What else do we want to observe and listen for before our next meeting? (Instruction Partners, 2019)

Key Tool(s)

- [Communication Plan Template \(Phase 4\)](#)

Step 4: Analyze Data and Make Adjustments

This step is designed to support district and school leadership teams as they examine progress towards the goals, identify key successes, learn from and solve significant challenges, and adjust the plan for the next chapter of work (Instruction Partners, 2019). While the team should meet consistently during the year for check-ins to monitor progress and make small adjustments, more formal meetings quarterly, and then yearly, give the team an opportunity to get a comprehensive view of overall progress on goals. Table 2.1 outlines essential actions that comprise both meeting types.

Table 2.1. Stepback Meetings

Meeting Type	Key Actions
Quarterly Stepback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze data to build a shared understanding of the successes and challenges aligned to this year’s 2-3 goals for effective curriculum implementation. • Identify drivers of successes and challenges. • Identify any important questions surfaced by the data. • Identify 2-3 areas of improvement. • Review and potentially refine implementation goals and aligned monitoring plan. • Plan how to communicate next steps and celebrate successes with stakeholders.
End-of-Year Stepback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze newly available data (e.g., summative data, relevant 4th quarter data, other data not available during the school year) and review data trends from previous quarters. • Identify and discuss celebrations and challenges. • Identify what should potentially be continued and what may change for the upcoming school year and then prioritize 2-3 areas of improvement. • Set implementation goals and develop aligned monitoring plan according to areas of improvement for the upcoming school year.



Meeting Type	Key Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan how to communicate next steps and celebrate successes with stakeholders.

Key Questions

- Quarterly Stepback Meeting Considerations:**
 - Where are we on pace to meet our goals?
 - What are the drivers of success?
 - Where are we off track to meet our goals? What is holding us back from meeting those goals?
 - What are the 2-3 areas we want to improve in next quarter?
 - For each of the 2-3 priorities, what is the root of the problem?
 - At our next stepback meeting, how will we know that these adjustments worked?
 - What do we need to observe and what additional data do we need to collect next quarter to know if it is working? (Instruction Partners, 2019)
- End-of-Year Stepback Meeting Considerations:**
 - Where did we meet our goals?
 - What were the drivers of success?
 - Where did we miss our goals? What held us back from meeting those goals?
 - What will be different next year, and what should our goals be to account for those differences?
 - What work needs to be done this summer to support teachers and leaders who have been using the curriculum to prepare for the next stage of implementation? (Instruction Partners, 2019)
- Stakeholder Inclusion:**
 - Following the quarterly and end-of-year stepbacks, how will we communicate to stakeholders:
 - “Bright spots” and exemplary practices (email, newsletter, social media, etc.), and
 - Adjustments and next steps in relation to the implementation and professional learning plans?

Key Tool(s)

- [Sample Quarterly Stepback Agenda](#)
- [Sample End-of-Year Stepback Agenda](#)
- [Communication Plan Template \(Phase 4\)](#)



References

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