Coaching Protocols for Unit Maps: Mapping to the Core

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External Alignment to CCSS

After targeted Common Core standards have been unwrapped, the language of the standard should be directly translated into the map. The curriculum makes the standard come alive in the classroom by creating clear content, skills, and assessments that support and fulfill the mission of the standard. By using color coding or highlighting when review maps, the nouns and verbs that were unwrapped in the standard can be viewed by the corresponding content, skills, and assessments in the map. When working on consensus mapping, the scaffolding of more complex maps can be clearly seen just as the standards become more complex.

Prompts-
Are the unwrapped standards evident in the map?
Are the maps building in a scaffold year to year in a corresponding way to the CCSS scaffold?

Detail on Content

—Content entry should begin with a clearly stated concept. A concept is a relational statement that describes a key idea or understanding. For example in science, a concept might be: "In the natural world there are systems comprised of interdependent component parts". So, when teaching the human anatomy in science, the curriculum should link all content and factual material to the concept of the human body as a system comprised of interdependent component parts. If we do not use a concept to initiate our content entries, then what we have are random facts disassociated pieces of knowledge. In short there should be a concept followed by bulleted, targeted content points with key facts, key

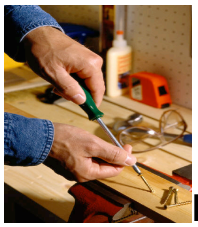
names, key events, and key points of knowledge to be addressed. Working with concepts makes writing essential questions much easier as well.

Prompts:
—Is there a clearly stated concept?
—Do the subcomponents link to
the concept?
—Are the subcomponents helpful
to the reader's understanding of the
key knowledge?
—Is there sufficient information to have
a working sense of the focus of the unit or strand?

Essential Questions

—Essential questions embed the concept into an interrogative form. Thus the learner is set into a path of inquiry in pursuit of knowledge and insight into the essential question. They take on the role of curriculum chapters in that they organize and focus and frame not only the content but the skills and assessment entered on the map. Reflecting the big idea and enduring understanding will service to guide and to the learner, essential questions when they are written directly for your specific student audience.

Prompts:
—Is there a clear concept driving the question?
—Is it written for the targeted students as the audience?
—Can it organize and frame a set of classroom experiences?
—Is it essential for the students given their experiences K-12?
—Does is align with standards?
—If there is more than one question, are all of them necessary?
—Does it link and bind content, skills, and assessments on the maps



Precision Skills

—Skills are desired or targeted proficiencies and must commence with an action verb with each entry. The specific action verb is necessary because skills can only be taught and learned when they are observable and assessable. The skill is strategically used by the student to investigate and examine the content. The skill might also ask the student to generate and to create in response to the content. Students need to be clear what actions they are cultivating whether skills within disciplines or cross-disciplinary in nature. Skills within a discipline reflect the language used in standards as developed by state education departments is presented in skill sets. Cross-disciplinary skills are characterized by their applicability in an area of work such as literacy strategies or specific study skills.

Prompts:

—Does each skill entry begin with a specific action verb?
—Do the skills make good sense as proficiencies to engage the learner with the content?
—Is there sufficient time on the map to work on cultivating the skill?

Targeted Assessments

—An assessment is a demonstration of learning thus it always takes the form of a either a tangible product or a temporal performance. An assessment is something we can observe, so our entries must take the form of a noun. The evidence of learning takes a form that will show the learner's progress or regress. Assessments must be presented in highly precise language because vague or unclear generic entries do not help describe the learner's experience. If a teacher enters the word "quiz" as an assessment, it is unclear what type of quiz, and the type makes a difference. A ten-item multiple choice quiz requires far different skill sets than a two paragraph constructed response quiz. Most important is that the assessment is genuine evidence of how our students are doing with what we want them to know and be able to do. The assessment should align with targeted skills, the content, and the essential questions.

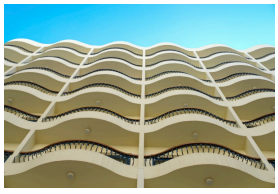
Prompts-

__ Does the assessment align directly to the Common Core standard?
—Does the assessment provide observable evidence of the targeted skills?
—Does the assessment provide evidence of the student's knowledge of the prescribed content?
—Is the assessment identified in a precise manner in a noun form?
__ Is the choice of formative or summative assessment deliberate?

Developmental Focus

—The primary focus of all of our efforts in creating curriculum maps is to assist the specific learners in our care. We need to always check our work to see if the developmental characteristics are evident in our curricular choices. The stage and age of the learners is a central consideration. Whether it is the highly concrete and sensory-motor needs of our youngest learners or the complex and more abstract cognitive abilities for our high school students, the maps need to correspond to those qualities. What is more, there are inherent emotional and physical considerations for each phase. A savvy teacher focuses the map to take advantage of and to build on the exciting features of each age and stage as well as wrestles with the challenges and limitations.

Prompts
—Do the maps reflect the specific needs of our specific students?
--Are all of the entries: content, skills, assessment, and essential questions age appropriate?
—Are they engaging and motivating for the learner?
___Are issues of text complexity thoughtfully considered?



Internal Alignment

—In any composition, the elements need to correspond and support one another. Whether it is a written composition, a musical composition, or a curriculum map, we want to be sure that all elements support and reflect the value of each of the others. The whole is the sum of the parts. Thus, in examining entries on a map we not only want to see external

alignment to the standard or to the mission statement, but internal alignment between the elements: content, skills, assessment, and essential questions. Internal alignment also suggests that the map aligns with those grade levels preceding and those that will follow. When appropriate the map should work across a grade level and disciplines. The design should be the best kind of "learning architecture". The map is a classroom planning blueprint.

Prompts

—Do the basic elements on the map align and support one another?

—Are there any elements disjointed from the whole?