

Program of Curriculum and Instruction

Eastern ensures that curricula meet the requirements of all appropriate New Jersey content standards by maintaining a schedule of ongoing evaluation and alignment. Curriculum development and improvement evolve from constant discussion of the best practices in teaching and learning and evaluation of vertical and horizontal articulation within content areas. Teachers develop unit plans as a collection of living curriculum resources that are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our students for graduation, college, careers, and state assessments.

Eastern uses the Marzano Art and Science of Teaching Framework as the basis for evaluating instruction. Student engagement and appropriate rigor are foundations for this framework. Teachers receive ongoing formal training and continued staff development on the tenets of the Marzano Framework. Learning goals and scales, a component of the Marzano Framework, outline essential learning within each unit of the curriculum for a given course.

A peer evaluation system also allows teachers to engage in professional, collaborative conversations aimed to improve instruction. The OnCourse Curriculum Portal/Unit Planner is a web-based platform allowing all teachers to continuously participate in improving the curriculum.

Additionally, the program of curriculum and instruction is supported and sustained through careful planning for assessment, differentiation, and integration of technology.

Assessment ↔ Differentiation ↔ Technology

Assessment:

Mission:

Assessment methods at Eastern accurately and appropriately measure each student's cumulative understanding of themes, concepts, and factual knowledge as well as strategies, processes, and skills aligned to standards to support students' college and career aspirations.

Values:

School-wide substantive consistency is balanced with department and course substantive consistency to provide school-wide clarity while also providing flexibility for teachers to use appropriate assessment methods to evaluate students' growth in achieving subject specific learning targets.

- Assessment methods determined by individual classroom teachers to fairly and accurately gather information about student achievement to inform decisions, allowing and encouraging students and the teacher to make beneficial adjustments.
- Assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, transparent, and continuously revised to support students as they address future, societal challenges.
- Assessment methods that value fairness, student diversity, clear learning targets, student involvement in development, and student reflection post assessment.
- Assessment methods that are meaningful to the students and the teacher, and validly track student progress over time for all stakeholders.
- Assessment methods that involve and encourage students to take an active role in their learning.
- Assessment methods that build teamwork between teachers, students and parents that clearly communicate expectations, how learning will be demonstrated, and why learning is important.

- Assessment methods that encourage and promote students' desire and perseverance to learn, without discouraging or defeating students' will to succeed.
- Assessment methods that focus students on their progress and understanding of the material rather than worrying about the grade.
- Assessment methods that provide prompt and meaningful feedback.

A variety of assessments, accompanied by feedback from teachers, support students as they attain the skills and knowledge outlined in state standards. Job-embedded professional development provides teachers with the time needed for continuous collaboration. In this collaborative environment, teachers reflect on their practice, improve instructional materials used to deliver a standards-based curriculum, and plan the structure for formative and summative assessments.

Differentiation:

At Eastern, we are committed to a program of curriculum and instruction that meets the needs of all students. Differentiated instruction provides a learning experience appropriate for each student's level of skill and knowledge.

Differentiation is approached through a variety of strategies: engaging learners at the appropriate level rigor; providing learners with multiple ways of representing understanding; creating opportunities for learners to share their ideas and work among peers with various backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives; and, scaffolding lessons appropriately as student skill and confidence increase.

Our larger structure for teaching and learning provides for targeted academic support programs after school and as an integral part of the school day. These support programs provide students with alternative strategies for problem solving and concept attainment.

Technology:

A variety of technological tools and resources are available to support the program of curriculum and instruction and deepen the learning experience at Eastern. These resources include SMART Boards, computer labs, and a one-to-one iPad program. The use of technology supports assessment and differentiation. The ever-expanding list of educational applications allows teachers to assess student learning and use data to make instructional decisions. The use of technology also allows for differentiation through interactive platforms, novel visual representations, and use of alternative teaching materials. Technology also provides a means of incorporating inquiry and allowing students to access and synthesize more information than is available without these resources.

Unit Plan Sections

Section	Guidelines
Unit Introduction	Brief statement that broadly describes the content of the unit (optional)
Standards	Current content standards required by NJDOE List of only those standards that correspond with learning goals/scales for the unit in question
Essential Questions	2-3 broad, complex questions that guide instruction within the unit
Content Skills	List of the procedural and/or declarative knowledge comprising new learning within the unit in question May also include recommended and required texts
Instructional Plan (Daily Learning Activities)	Describe/upload content from most effective lessons Collaborative, living resource of instructional materials for teachers May include pacing guide (This section is not published to the public link.)
Monitoring Strategies/ Assessments	Describe SPECIFIC formative and summative assessments used within the unit in question May include sample test items/writing prompts/project ideas
Differentiation	Describe SPECIFIC differentiation strategies for the content/unit in question that will be used to engage and meet the needs of all learners May include alternative assessment items
Technology Integration of Technology	Describe SPECIFIC strategies/tools appropriate for the unit in question List only technology standards that correspond with learning goals/scales for the unit in question
21 st Century 21 st Century Themes 21 st Century Skills	List of only items appropriate for the unit in question
Interdisciplinary Connections	List of only connections appropriate for the unit in question