

GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL MINISTRY REVIEW OF DRAFT CURRICULUM

BACKGROUND

Diversity is one of the most prominent features of British Columbia's society and our schools. In its design, the provincially prescribed curriculum supports an education system in which all students are fully participating members of a community of learners and can develop their individual potential.

The Ministry of Education's formal process for the development of provincially prescribed curricula includes both an Internal Review and an External Review of draft material during the curriculum development process. The Internal Review involves soliciting feedback from individuals and groups within the Ministry of Education. The External Review involves soliciting feedback from members of the general public and from other government ministries in which there is expertise relevant to a particular curriculum under development. All comments and suggestions for improvements are taken into consideration as curriculum is developed and finalized.

REVIEW OF DRAFT CURRICULUM

Internal Review

When first drafted, a curriculum document is circulated for review within the Ministry of Education. Individuals and groups in various parts of the organization are invited to offer comments and suggestions for improvement from the perspective of their particular area of responsibility/expertise. All comments and suggestions are taken into consideration as a second draft of the curriculum is prepared. The second draft or 'Response Draft' is submitted for initial approval and sign-off by executive within the Ministry of Education and posted to the Ministry website for public review.

External Review

Once a 'Response Draft' has been approved and signed off within the Ministry of Education, it is posted on the Ministry of Education web site for public review and response – i.e., to elicit comments from individuals and groups who are members of the general public.

Concurrently, curriculum coordinators liaise with government ministries in which there is expertise relevant to the particular curriculum under development. Individuals and groups in these other ministries are invited to offer comments and suggestions for improvement from the perspective of alignment with the current policies and initiatives of that ministry. Comments and suggestions for improvements are taken into consideration as the curriculum document is finalized.

The 'Response Draft' is also shared with education partner organizations such as the BC School Trustees Association, BC School Superintendents Association, BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, BC Teachers' Federation, and BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils for review and response. In some instances, school districts are contracted to conduct in-depth review of a 'Response Draft' or are invited to conduct a pilot implementation of the draft curriculum in schools within the district. Comments and suggestions for additional improvements are solicited and taken into consideration as the curriculum is finalized.

When the curriculum document is finalized, it is submitted for final approval and sign-off to the executive within the Ministry of Education. The curriculum becomes an Integrated Resource Package or 'IRP'. The IRP is posted to the Ministry of Education web site and print copies are distributed to schools for implementation.

INTERNAL REVIEW

Review Perspective

As part of the regular curriculum development process, individuals and groups in various parts of the Ministry of Education review Draft curriculum documents from the perspective of their particular area of responsibility/expertise.

Individuals and groups from each of the departments/branches/units are asked to provide written comments and suggestions for improvements regarding the extent to which the curriculum:

- develops student knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the subject area
- is relevant and accurate
- complies with policy and legislation related to the school system
- is congruent and aligns with other curricula
- is compatible with the goals of the graduation program
- is assessable for provincial examinations
- supports literacy and numeracy goals and standards
- supports emerging government initiatives and priorities
- is inclusive of and accessible to all learners

Governance and Accountability Department

- Ministry staff in the **Governance and Accountability Department** with portfolio responsibility: in the area of **Governance and Legislation** offer comments and suggestions about the draft curriculum in regard to matters of policy and legislation related to the K-12 school system; in the area of **Aboriginal Education** offer comments and suggestions about the extent to which the draft curriculum addresses the needs and interests of Aboriginal learners; and in the area of **Diversity and Equity** offer comments and suggestions about the extent to which the draft curriculum takes into consideration the needs and interests of diverse learners.

Knowledge Management Department

- Ministry staff in the **Knowledge Management Department** with portfolio responsibility in the area of Assessment in the K-12 school system offer comments and suggestions about the draft curriculum in regard to the assessability of the draft prescribed learning outcomes for provincially examinable subject areas.

Learning Management Department

- Ministry staff in the **Learning Management Department** with portfolio responsibility in the area of **Curriculum Development** in all subject areas of the British Columbia provincially prescribed curriculum offer comments and suggestions about the draft curriculum from the perspective of cross-curricular alignment, congruency, and accuracy.

Partnerships and Planning Department

- Ministry staff in the **Partnerships and Planning Department** with portfolio responsibility related to **Current and Emerging Ministry Programs and Government and Initiatives** offer comments and suggestions about the draft curriculum in regard to curriculum alignment with these programs and initiatives, e.g., Healthy Schools (including Action Schools), Physical Activity, Community Link, Early Learning, and Literacy.

Resource Management Department

- Ministry staff in the **Resource Management Department** with portfolio responsibility in the area of **Student Transitions** offer comments and suggestions about the draft curriculum in regard to Career Development, Workplace Training, Graduation Program Requirements and other student transitions.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines provide a framework for reviewing each draft curriculum and offering comments and suggestions about the extent to which the needs and interests of diverse learners have been taken into consideration.

General Considerations

When examining the various components of the draft curriculum from the perspectives of inclusion and accessibility for all students, reviewers consider whether the draft document:

- supports the principles of learning
- is accurate in terms of subject matter and portrayals
- is current and relevant

- provides prescribed learning outcomes, suggested achievement indicators, examples, instruction, assessment, and recommended learning resources that are accessible for a variety of teaching and learning styles
- provides opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills
- promotes awareness, understanding, and respect for the diversity of Canadian society;
- reflects and validates the life experience of students of varied backgrounds, interests, abilities, and needs
- provides positive role models and presents different points of view
- reflects accurate representations and avoids stereotype
- supports the development of positive social attitudes and promotes respect for diversity and human rights

Specific Considerations

When considering the various components of the draft curriculum from the perspectives of inclusion and accessibility for all students, reviewers consider the following:

Aboriginal Peoples – representation of Aboriginal peoples; portrayals, both in historical and contemporary contexts, are accurate; recognition of the diversity of cultures present among Aboriginal peoples.

Age – representation of individuals and groups at various stages along the continuum of life; portrayals are realistic and avoid stereotype.

Belief System – topics of philosophy, religion and/or political ideology, when included, are presented with a clear purpose and provide opportunity for critical thinking; make a clear distinction between fact and opinion and do not advocate one belief system over another

Ability-Disability – representation of experiences and perspectives of individuals and groups along the continuum of ability-disability; portrayal is realistic and accurate; emphasis is on ability and contribution.

Ethical and Legal – issues that may be subject to legal or ethical debate, when included, are presented with a clear purpose and provide opportunity for critical thinking; make a clear distinction between fact and opinion; provide opportunity for expanded understanding of alternative points of view; provide accurate and current data.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation – representation of individuals and groups across the full range of gender identity and sexual orientation; contributions are emphasized; portrayals are positive, non-denigrating, reflect diversity, and avoid stereotype.

Gender Roles – representation of females and males in diverse roles and relationships; portrayals reflect diversity and avoid stereotype.

Humour – if included, is used to engage student interest in the subject; humour is used in a positive, non-denigrating manner.

Language – language used contributes to audience engagement and/or instructional effectiveness; is age appropriate; does not overuse specific language for effect or language that has limited meaning; is not disrespectful, discourteous, or defamatory.

Multiculturalism – representations reflect cultural diversity; portrayals are respectful and culturally accurate e.g., language, dialect, custom, dress, diet, roles etc.; similarities and differences within and among cultures and ethno-specific groups are recognized.

Safety – reflects legal and community standards of safe practice and common sense; provides opportunities for students to understand the importance of safe practices and to develop understanding of personal responsibility as it relates to safety of self and others; models safe practice and common sense; includes directions/instructions for safe equipment use and materials handling.

Socio-Economic – representation reflects the full range the realities of day-to-day life in Canadian society; respects the socio-economic realities of British Columbia students.

Violence – violence, tension, and graphic imagery, where included, have a clear purpose and support instruction; level and degree of explicitness takes into account the age and maturity of intended audience; provides opportunities for modelling effective problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies; provides opportunities for students to develop compassion and empathy.

**Ministry of Education Curriculum Development
Internal Review (DRAFT)
Sample Cover and Ministry Sign-Off Page**

Name of Draft IRP Reviewed

Subject Area

Grade Level

Reviewing Department/Branch/Unit

Review Perspective

Comments/Suggestions for Improvements – Summary

Reviewers: Please write comments/suggestions directly on the draft curriculum document and tab pages to facilitate follow up by curriculum coordinators/developers. Please provide a brief summary of department/branch/unit review/response in the space provided below.

Please return the draft curriculum document together with summary comments to:

Curriculum Coordinator

Contact Information

Manager/Director's Signature _____ **Date**

Lead Director Signature _____ **Date**
