

Alternative Curriculum from Adoption through Implementation

Provide equitable, inclusive access to the general education curriculum with a K-12 standards-aligned and evidence-based adapted core curriculum.

DISTRICT196

One District. Infinite Possibilities.



Inclusive Welcome

Turn and Talk

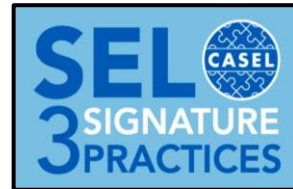
Identify a high-priority instructional area in your district where current resources feel thin. If you were handed a research-based, 'plug-and-play' curriculum for that program tomorrow...

- How would that consistency transform students' daily engagement and mastery?
- Beyond just the subjects, what specific skill gaps would this bridge?
- What is the one 'needle-moving' change you'd expect to see in student engagement?



2:00

[Link to the SEL Signature Practices Playbook](#)



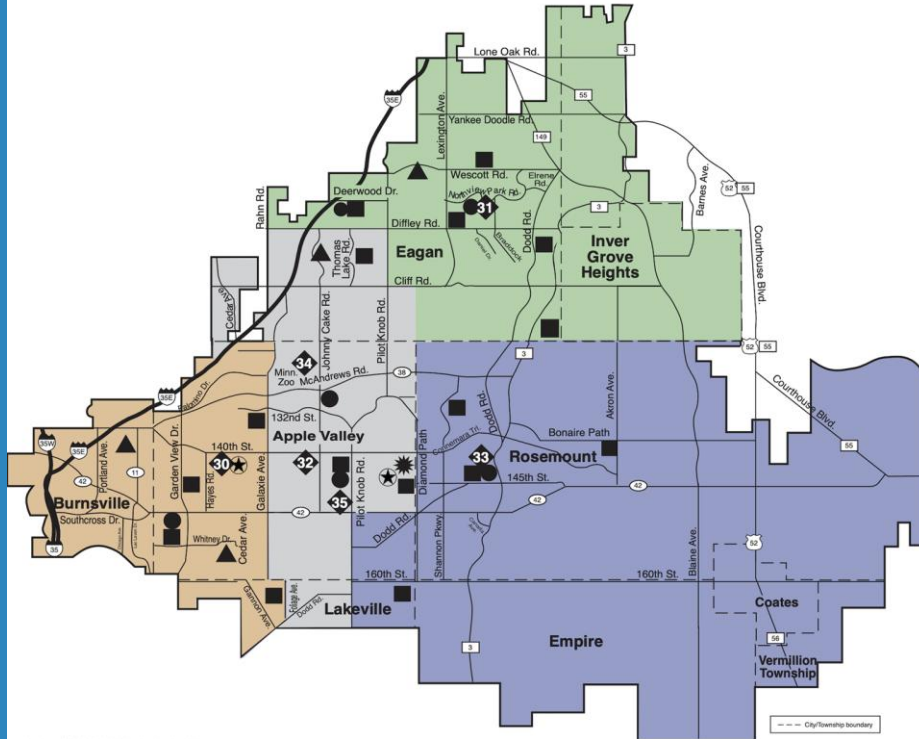
Who We Are



Nice to
meet you!

- **Janet Fimmen:** Director of Special Education
- **Lindsay Engberg:** Special Education Coordinator
- **Kelly Wuensch:** Special Education Coordinator

Who We Are



- **3rd largest District in State**
- **30,000+ Students**
- **5459 Students Receiving SPED Services**
- **36 Sites**
 - **20 Elementary Schools**
 - **6 middle schools**
 - **4 comprehensive high schools**
 - **11-12th grade high school**
 - **ALC**
 - **3 special education sites (ECSE, Setting 4, Transition)**



**Have you ever
purchased a curricular
resource only to have it
sit unopened, collecting
dust on a shelf?**

Outcome for Today:

Understand 3 Pillars of Implementation



- Identifying Needs: Needs assessment
- Selection: Choosing with Intention
- Rollout and Sustainability: Beyond the “one and done” training

Center-based Programs



THRIVE

Serves students with unique health needs who have significant educational needs in the areas of communication and functional skills, and require a highly supported, small group instructional environment.

CONNECT

Serves students who have significant educational needs in social communication and self regulation, and require a highly supported, small group instructional environment.

SKILLS

Serves students who have educational needs in functional and academic skills. Students may receive instruction in the classroom, community environments and/or job training sites, as specified in the individual education plan.

ACHIEVE

Serves students who have educational needs in emotional, behavioral and self-regulation skills in a supported environment.

STRATEGIES

Serves students who have educational needs in social communication and self regulation skills in a supported environment.

You can find this information and program locations at [this link](#) from our district website



Considering our Needs



	# of classrooms	# of students
Connect - Elem	20	140
Connect - MS	7	42
Connect HS	7	42
Thrive Elem	3	17
Thrive MS	1	6
Thrive HS	1	6
Skills Elem	6	55
Skills MS	5	50
Skills HS	7.5	75
Approximate Totals	65	450

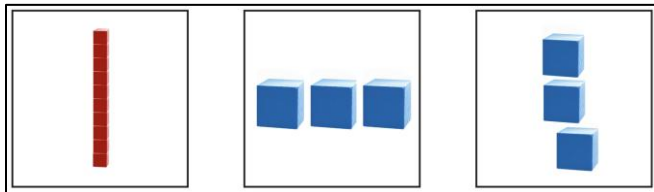
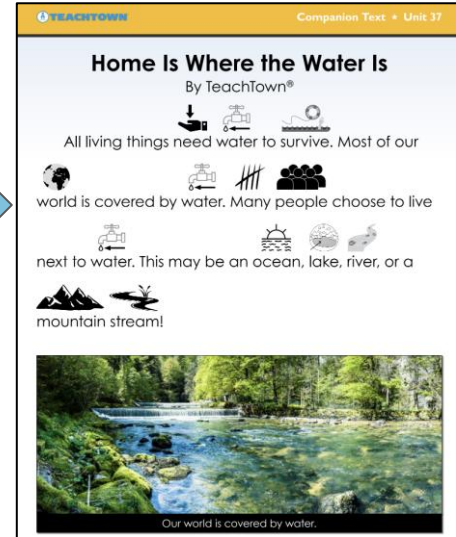
Alternative... Think MTAS

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
INTRODUCE	Today, we are going to learn about words that have multiple meanings. Sometimes, one word can mean two different things. For example, let's think about the word "over." The word "over" can mean that something is finished. We could say, "The game is over." The word "over" can also mean on top of something. We could say, "The horse jumped over the fence." So, the word "over" can mean two different things! Let's learn some other words that have multiple meanings.		
MODEL	Show the students the Picture Card of the written letter. This is a letter. We can write a letter to our friends and family members. Show students the Picture Card of the letter of the alphabet. This is also a letter. This is a letter of the alphabet. "Letter" is a multiple meaning word. It can mean a letter we write or a letter of the alphabet. It has two different meanings!		
GUIDED PRACTICE	Show the students the Picture Card of the written letter. This is a letter. Show students two other Picture Cards (the letter of the alphabet and a distractor Picture Card). Which picture is a letter? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed. That's right. This is also a letter. This is a letter of the alphabet! Repeat with "trunk" and "bat."	Put all six Picture Cards in front of the students. Let's match the words with multiple meanings! Show the Picture Card of the written letter. What is this? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed. That's right! This is a letter. We can write letters to our friends and family. Can you find a picture of a different kind of letter? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed.	Show the students the Picture Card of the letter of the alphabet. What is this? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed. That's right! This is a letter. Can you tell me a sentence using the word "letter"? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed. Now, can you think of a different kind of letter? Allow students to respond, providing support as needed.

Scripted lessons with 3 levels

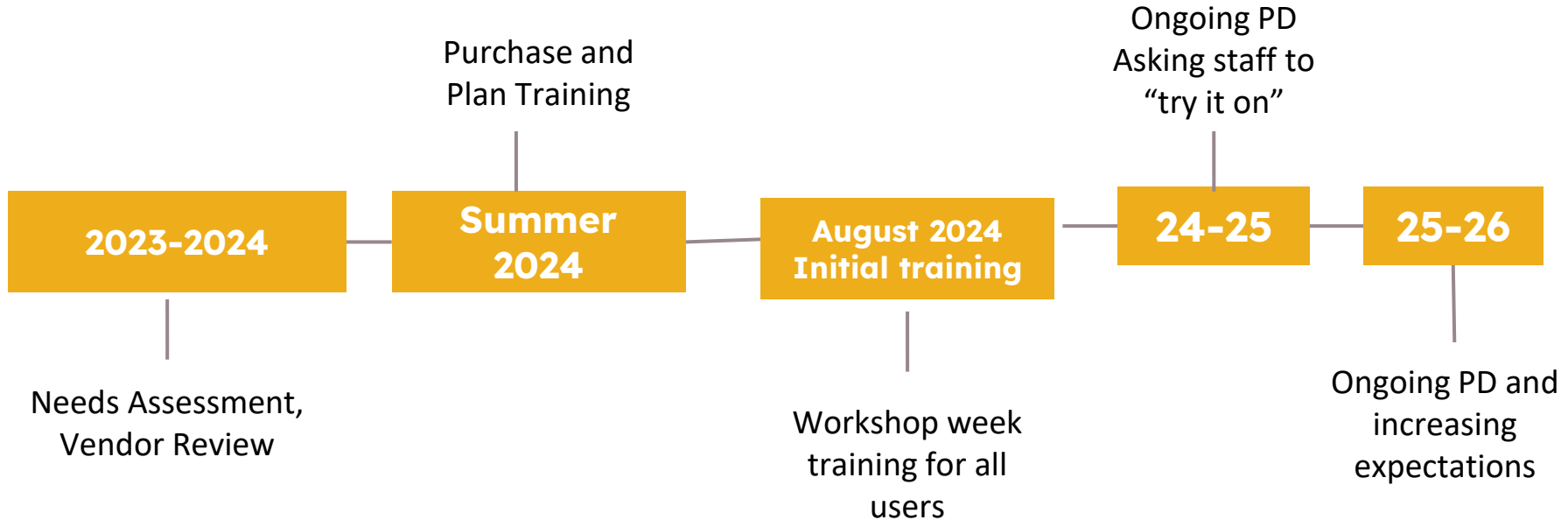
Materials:

- Manipulatives kit
- Adapted reading library
- Teacher manuals



Assessments

Our Journey



December 2023 - May 2024

Identifying Needs and Considering Alternative Curriculums



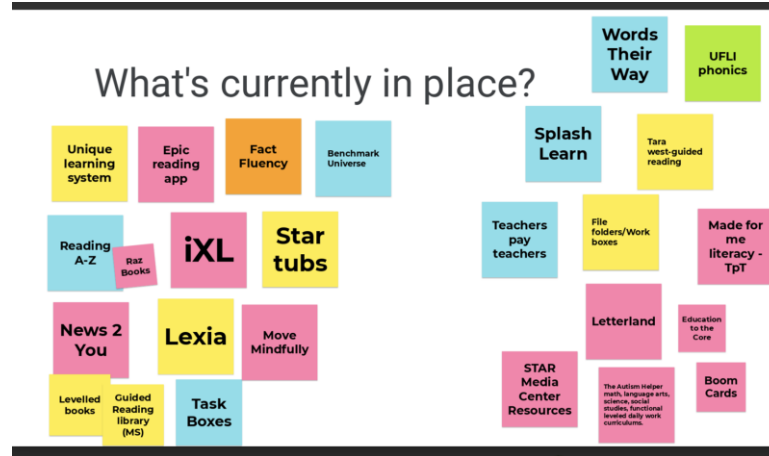
December/January	-Special Ed Admin and TOSAs begin planning
January	-Meet with Stakeholders to get input on needs -Compiled feedback into survey to help develop rubric
February	-Stakeholders reviewed rubric and possible vendors
March	-Communicating with vendors regarding timing for vendor day, center-based program descriptions and our rubric
April	-Vendor event to review 4 possible curriculums that were under consideration based on initial review with rubric

Spring 2024 Needs Assessment



Step 1:

Workgroup of teachers and sped admin started meeting to assess needs



What needs are not being met?



What did we need?

Comprehensive Curriculum

We considered the comprehensiveness of the materials in covering each of the seven areas identified.

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- SEL
- Transition Skills and/or Functional Life Skills



Rubric Components for Reviewing Comprehensive Alternative Curriculum

Thank you for being a part of the alternative curriculum review group. Based on your input, we've created a list of potential components to consider when reviewing curricula. Please rate the importance of each element, which will be used to create a weighted rubric

As we review curricula, we will also consider the comprehensiveness of the materials in covering each of the seven areas identified.

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- SEL
- Transition Skills and/or Functional Life Skills

Teacher Input

Implementation Elements - How important is it that the curricula selected include the following elements? *

	1 - Minimally important	2 - Somewhat important	3 - Very important	4 - Extremely important
Adaptable for AAC users	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access for physical/vision needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Active engagement/opportunities to respond for all levels of learner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Essential Curriculum Elements - How important is it that the curricula selected include the following elements? *

	1 - Minimally important	2 - Somewhat important	3 - Very important	4 - Extremely important
Comprehensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scope and sequence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiated levels of materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Accessibility and Adaptability Elements - How important is it that the curricula selected include the following elements? *

	1 - Minimally important	2 - Somewhat important	3 - Very important	4 - Extremely important
Multi-sensory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tangible/hands on components	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art projects aligned to skill	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorporates visual supports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to materials on iPad/digital	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Equity & Inclusion Elements - How important is it that the curricula selected include the following elements? *

	1 - Minimally important	2 - Somewhat important	3 - Very important	4 - Extremely important
Aligns with Absent Narratives Rubric	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age-respectful materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Instructional Usability Elements - How important is it that the curricula selected include the following elements? *

	1 - Minimally important	2 - Somewhat important	3 - Very important	4 - Extremely important
Low lift for teachers or centralized process for filling the lift gap	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offers instructional guidance/algnuage/etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Selection Process



Using Rubric to Select Vendors

Vendor/Publisher:		Rater:	
Rating Scale: 0 - no evidence, 1 - minimal evidence, 2 - some evidence, 3 - strong evidence			
Material Content	Rating Scale 0-3	Designed for K-12? Yes or No	Notes/Comments
Reading (<i>Comprehension, Vocabulary, Fluency, Phonics, Phonemic Awareness</i>)			
Writing			
Math			
Science			
Social Studies			
SEL			
Transition skills			

Rubric for Consideration Vendors:

Vendor 1	Rationale for Selection
Vendor 2	A comprehensive curriculum (across content areas) developed with students with significant disabilities in mind to serve as an alternative curriculum.
Vendor 3	
Vendor 4	



Turn and Talk

Needs Assessment & Selection

- What content areas might your teachers identify as:
 - need areas for more explicit instruction and / or lacking curricular resources?
 - priorities in selecting a new curriculum?



The Rollout

Supporting Teachers



Spring 2024:

- 90 Minute Zoom Learning Lab for all teachers to preview curriculum

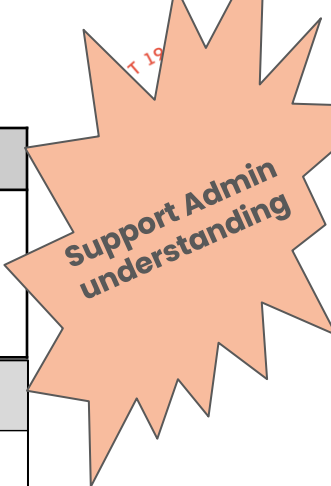
2024-2025: 3 Half Day PD Sessions (Teachtown Trainers)

- August 2024: Encore 101
- October 2024: Encore 102
- December 2024: Encore 103











**100 %
Attendance
August Rollout**

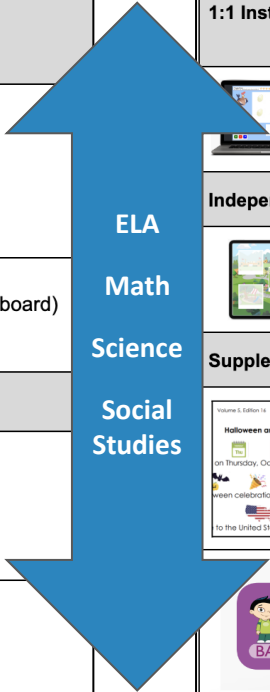
TeachTown - Exploration Plan



Expectations

- Utilizing curriculum materials from the respective school level of the students (i.e. elementary grades K-5, middle school grades 6-8, high school grades 9-12)
- Utilizing Levels 1, 2, or 3 scripts or materials to support differentiation
- Stepping into enCORE curriculum in some capacity, as we move into full implementation next year

Whole Group Instruction		1:1 Instruction	
	Classroom-Based Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct Instruction ● Modeling 		Teacher-Led Tech Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1:1 ● Teacher feedback ● Prompting, cues
Independent Practice - Students complete on their own			
	Teacher-Led Tech Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whole group (e.g. Smartboard) ● Teacher feedback ● Prompting, cues 		Student-Led Tech Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discrete trial training ● Immediate feedback ● Individualized learning based on student data
Supplemental			
Small Group Instruction		enCORE Current Events	
	Classroom-Based Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guided practice ● Shared instruction ● Small groups 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current Events content with a lesson plan structure that supports learning outcomes across content areas if all areas of the lesson plan are utilized. ● Lesson plan, worksheets, and Teacher-led tech are available for each Current Event
	Teacher-Led Tech Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small groups ● Teacher feedback ● Prompting, cues 		TeachTown Basics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language Arts (ELA) ● Cognitive Skills (ELA/Math/Science) ● Adaptive Skills (ELA/Math) ● Mathematics ● Language Development (ELA/Science)



Ongoing Coaching

Supporting Implementation and Practices



In classroom coaching (across 21 sites)

2024-2025: 4 days

2025-2026: 4 days

2026-2027: 4 days planned

What does this look like ?

- Time for teachers to have 1:1 with a trainer
- Arrange support for other enCORE user teachers to observe
- Observe teacher doing a lesson
- Coach can model a lesson
- Like to schedule 5-6 teachers on 1 day
- Coach can go from classroom to classroom

Coaching was included in our package with our initial purchase

enCore: PD in '25-26



New Teachers

- enCORE 101 - New Educator August 19
- Coaching support from SPED Leads

Returning Teachers

- 8/20 SPED Resource Fair: enCORE breakouts
- 9/26/25 enCORE Implementation PD**
- 12/22 enCORE Implementation PD**
- 3/20 enCORE Implementation PD**

**All district-directed Data Days, OL&LA training may conflict for some

enCORE Curriculum Implementation	
Who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Connect, Skills, & Thrive Teachers
Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 9/26 (DAIA Day) - TBD● 12/22 (DAIA Day) - TBD● 3/20 (DAIA Day) - TBD

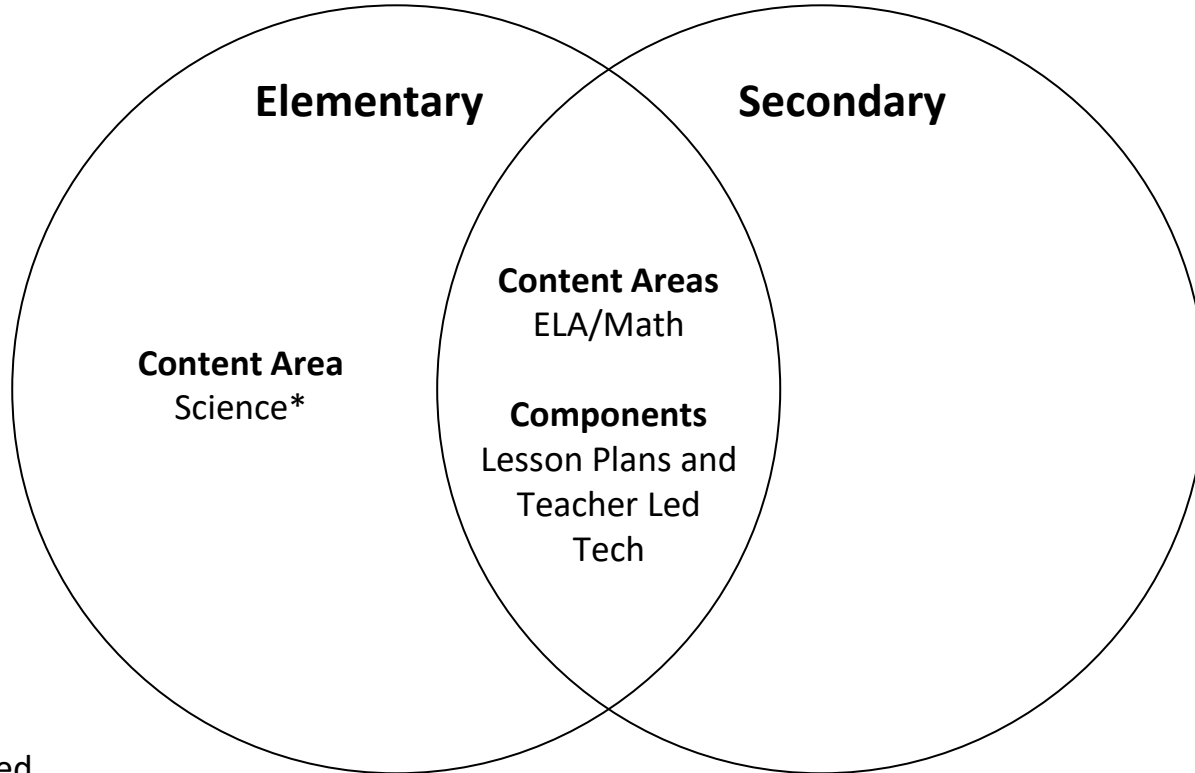
Sustainability and Ongoing Implementation

2025-2026



- 3 PD Sessions on District Data Days (September, December, March)
 - Separate Sessions for Elementary and Secondary
 - Focus on content related to implementation goals, instructional strategies, use of data, intensifying instruction, & opportunities to collaborate
- New Teacher Onboarding Training
- Special Education Leads providing on-site coaching and support
- Admin support for expectations and TDE

enCORE: Implementation in '25-26



*if not in gen ed

Tights and Rights



Elementary Initial Implementation



Tights

- ELA, Math, and Science content
- Unit Assessments (pre- and post-)
- Teacher-Led Technology Lessons

Mights

- Social Studies content
- Daily Implementation Guides
- Student-Led Technology
- Benchmark Assessments
- Current Events/Chronicle
- *Generalization/Extension Activities*
- *Supplemental/Review Materials*
- *Lesson Plan Data Sheets*

Secondary Initial Implementation



Tights

- ELA and Math content
- Unit Assessments (pre- and post-)
- All Lesson Plan components
- Teacher-Led Technology
- Daily Implementation Guides (DIGS)

Mights

- Social Studies & Science content
- Student-Led Technology
- Benchmark Assessments
- Current Events/Chronicle
- *Generalization/Extension Activities*
- *Skills Review Unit*
- *Lesson Plan Data Sheets*

Usage Data

Teacher Report for use



83 %

Math

98 %

ELA

54 %

Science

46%

**Social
Studies**

Teacher Confidence



Teachers Feel Highest Confidence:

- **Lesson Plans (Physical Materials):** This area received the highest frequency of "10" ratings. Teachers express strong confidence in navigating the physical binders, scripted lessons, and tactile resources provided.
- **Unit Assessments:** Educators feel highly confident in their ability to administer and interpret the end-of-unit assessments to track student progress.

Teachers Feel Less Confidence:

- **Teacher-Led Tech Sessions:** This is the most common area for low confidence scores. Teachers frequently cited technical hurdles or a lack of training on how to effectively lead the interactive technology components of the lessons.
- **Data Collection & Reporting:** While not as low as tech sessions, a notable number of teachers rated their confidence in the "1-3" range for using the automated data reporting tools within the enCORE platform.

Knowledge & Capacity for Building Admin



Implementation of Curriculum - enCORE



Instructional Design & Alignment

Differentiation & Support

Student Engagement & Participation

Behavior Supports & Classroom Climate

Communication Supports

Instructional Fidelity & Teacher Moves

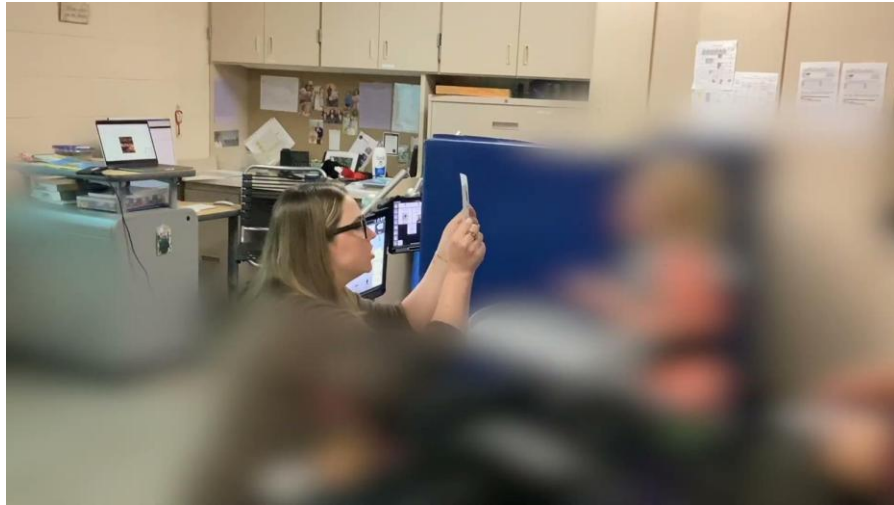
Data & Progress Monitoring

Generalization & Real-World Connections

Implementation of Curriculum - enCore



Elementary Example



Secondary Example



Connecting to TDE



enCORE PAS/TDE Questions

Domain 1 - Planning & Preparation:

- How do the skills/knowledge within this lesson fit into the bigger unit and structure within enCORE?
- What content goals and IEP goals are you addressing through this enCORE lesson?

Domain 2 - Classroom Environment:

- What are some things related to routines or self-management within, or beyond, enCORE that are influencing your lesson?
- What are some resources or materials from enCORE you've used to support and extend student learning?

Domain 3 - Instruction:

- How are you using the Levels 1-3 of enCORE to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of your students?
- How will you use enCORE materials across whole group / small group / and/or 1:1 opportunities in this lesson? In other times in the schedule?

Turn and Talk Engaging Building Admin



- What specific strategies have worked for you or what new ideas are you considering, to ensure building administrators are active champions of special education curriculum rollout?

Celebrating Progress & Keeping the Work Visible



Subject: Today's TeachTown Visit

Hi

Thanks for letting us come out with TeachTown to visit your Skills classroom, and for being willing to teach the lesson. As someone who has had outside trainers observe me teaching, I know it can be uncomfortable, and people often prefer to watch Nancy teach instead.

In your class, you demonstrated a high level of intentionality and skill in the following areas:

- Clear learning targets
- Steady pacing & wait time
- Student use of technology — supporting access of all students using their digital tools in ways that will support them in other classes
- Supporting student's engagement with complex math ideas/skills (line of best fit, correlation, negative correlation, positive correlation—WOW!) in accessible ways throughout the lesson
- Using interactive white board to visually model concepts & engage students
- Gradual release of responsibility in the ways students engage/participant

The type of learning your students engaged in—and even the way they navigate through the hallways of EHS independently and access & use their devices is a beautiful example of presuming potential and supporting student independence.

Thanks for letting us be a part of your classroom today. We will email out Nancy's link for scheduling a time to debrief to talk through any questions/wonderings you have about the curriculum and/or curriculum resources. I'm also happy to chat about some of your thoughts/ideas on what might be supportive from a district stance in supporting your teaching work.

Thank you!!

Feedback & Celebrations



Specific teacher shout-outs based on data (CC building admin / coordinators)

Admin feedback:

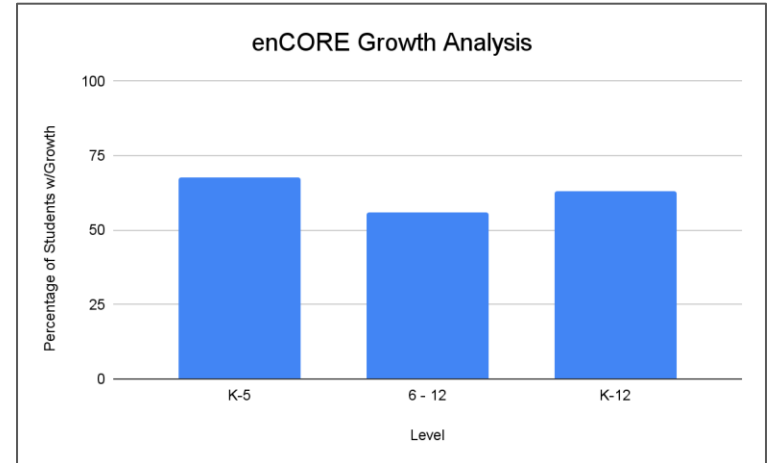
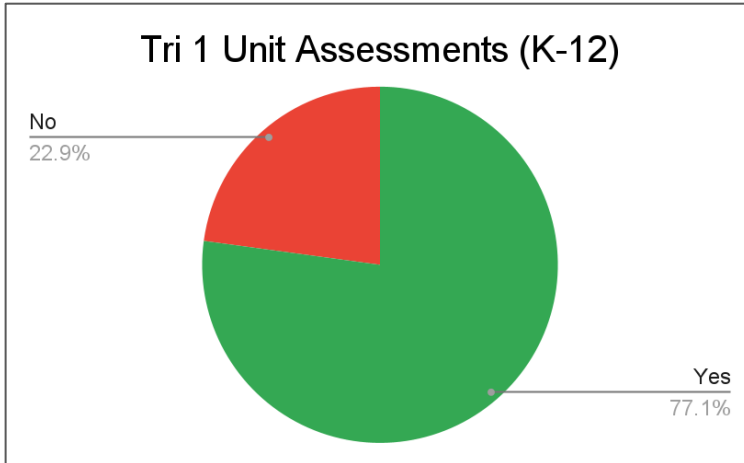
- Data is being shared (and made visible) during IEP meetings
- Supportive to have alternate PLC calendar guidance /topics identified for enCORE teachers

Using Data: Unit Assessments



Unit Assessments

- 77% of teachers administered at least one unit test during Trimester 1
- As of 12/2/25, 63% of students showed growth between pre- and post-test scores (n=130)*
 - 518 K-12 licenses



Challenges and Ongoing Growth



What we are finding

- Cultural considerations and state standard alignment in units
 - Replaced To Kill a Mockingbird with Dakota Author Text (Rolling out 26-27)
 - Christopher Columbus Unit we hope to revise in future
- Equity Audit
 - Currently considering representation in curriculum
- Explicit Reading / Decoding (specifically at secondary)
- Fluctuation in Licenses
 - Initial contract was specific to a number, now have updated contract to include adding licenses as needed
- Interest for teachers from programs outside these programs
 - Increasing resources for students in other programs (access specialized tools, Tier 1, Tier 2 instructional tools)
 - Supporting mixed groups where some students have encore access and others do not

Turn and Talk

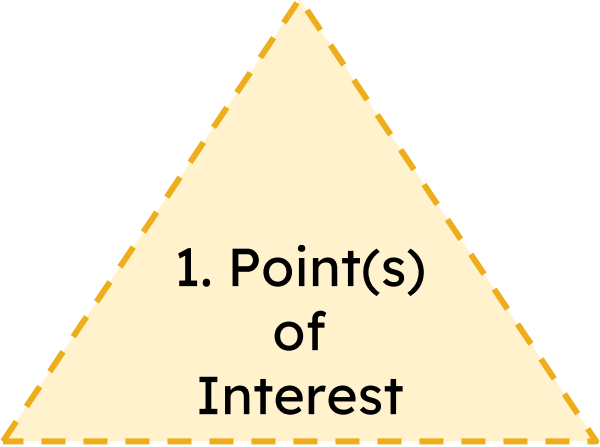
Reflecting on Practice



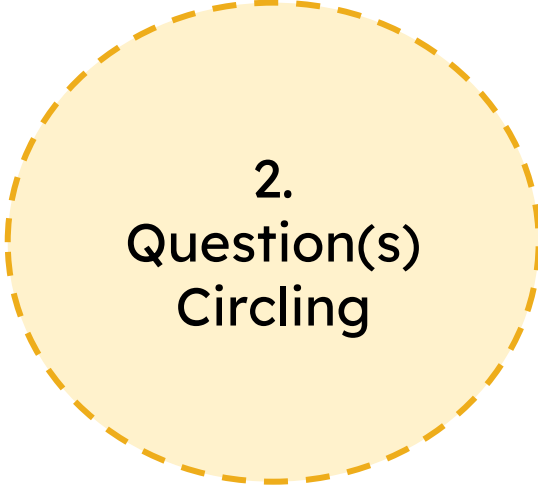
- What stage are you in with a curriculum adoption?
 - Identifying needs
 - Selection
 - Rollout and Sustainability
- What is one thing you are thinking about that could help with you move forward with a sustainable rollout of a new curriculum?

Optimistic Close

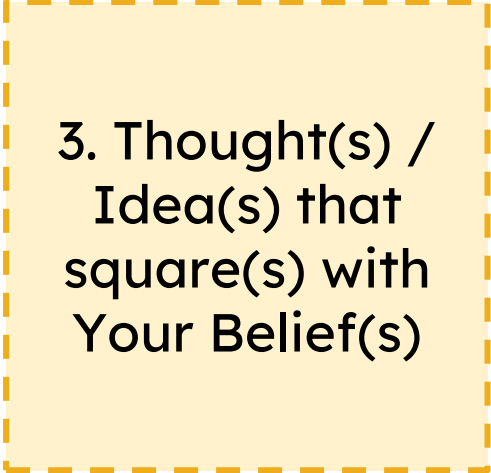
Shapes



1. Point(s)
of
Interest



2.
Question(s)
Circling



3. Thought(s) /
Idea(s) that
square(s) with
Your Belief(s)



QUESTIONS?

Janet.Fimmen@district196.org

Kelly.Wuensch@district196.org

Lindsay.Engberg@district196.org