

Curriculum Corner

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Highlights of the Duxbury Public Schools March 2016

Critical Thinking Across the Content Standards

Each of the most recent state and national curriculum updates shift the focus from purely content information to critical thinking, evaluation and application. These skills first emerged in the English Language Arts and math curriculum frameworks adopted in 2011. The Massachusetts Board of Education approved updated science standards this January. Our district level work in Social Studies revealed similar findings at the national level where the emphasis is on themes rather than rote dates. In the world languages, the priority is now on communication and collaboration rather than grammar. Each of the curricula have specific content skill strands along with corresponding thinking strands. While the verbiage varies slightly, the intent is the same. In an age where information is at our fingertips, the focus needs to be on student ability to understand, make judgments, develop hypotheses and draw conclusions. The list below names the critical thinking strand and provides links to the various curriculum documents.

English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

MA Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy (2011)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/ela/0311.pdf>

Math: The Standards for Mathematical Practice

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Math (2011)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/math/0311.pdf>

Science: Science and Engineering Practices

Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards (2016)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2016-01.pdf>

Social Studies: The Inquiry Arc, Dimensions 1-4

College, Career and Civic Life: C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (2013)

<http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>

World Language: The 5 "C" Goal Areas

World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2015)

<http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/World-ReadinessStandardsforLearningLanguages.pdf>