

Ministry of Education outline of Ontario's current curriculum development process

What is the role of the Ministry of Education in curriculum development?

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of curriculum. School boards and schools are responsible for the implementation of curriculum.

To develop the curriculum, the Ministry of Education established a curriculum review cycle to ensure that the curriculum remains current, relevant, and developmentally-appropriate from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

What are curriculum documents?

Curriculum policy documents identify what students must know and be able to do at the end of every grade or course in every subject in Ontario publicly funded schools.

Curriculum documents are made up of three components:

- The front matter provides critical foundational information about the curriculum itself and about how learning connects to Ministry of Education policies, programs, and priorities.
- The curriculum expectations (overall and specific expectations) are the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate in each subject at each grade level by the end of the grade.
- Additional supports, glossaries and overviews are included to provide further guidance and information to support the implementation of the curriculum.

What are policy and resource documents?

- Policy documents outline mandatory requirements and standards. In the case of education, the *Ontario Curriculum Social Science and Humanities, Grades 9 to 12, 2013 (revised)* is an example of a curriculum policy document. It sets out what the public can expect children to learn in Ontario's Social Sciences and Humanities program.
- Resource documents support implementation of policy and their use is a local decision. An example of a resource document is: *Environmental Education, Scope and Sequence of Expectations, Grades 9-12, 2011*

What is the curriculum review process?

- In Ontario, the Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of curriculum policy documents.
- In 2003, the Ministry established an ongoing cycle of curriculum review.
- The review is not a development of a completely new curriculum, but is intended to ensure that the curriculum remains current and relevant and is developmentally appropriate from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in all subjects.
- A number of subject disciplines have entered the review process each year.

- The review supports students, teachers, schools and boards by identifying targeted areas in need of support and allows lead time for development or updating of related support materials as required.
- **Research**
The Curriculum Review process is a research-based and evidence-informed process that begins with third party research and benchmarking of the Ontario curriculum against curricula from across Canada and around the world.
- **Analysis and Synthesis**
Teams of experts in the subject discipline from across the province analyze the current curriculum against the desired state for the revised curriculum. All information gathered from experts, focus groups, consultations, research and benchmarking is synthesized and directions for revision writing are identified.
- **Revision and Feedback Consultation**
A draft, reflecting revised expectations and examples based on analysis and synthesis and that reflects current direction in the discipline, is developed. Sessions are held to gather input via a variety of opportunities, including face to face and web enabled sessions.
- **Editing and Publication**
Experts in the subject discipline review the manuscript to ensure academic accuracy. Final reviews for bias, equity and inclusive education, First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives, environmental education, and financial literacy occur to ensure that the manuscript is inclusive and reflects the direction of the Ministry of Education.

Editing of the proposed draft revisions is done by professional editors. As needed, small targeted revision writing teams refine the proposed draft and focused consultation on final revisions may also be held.

- **Training and Implementation**
Once released, board teams and stakeholders are invited to implementation learning sessions about the revised curriculum. Resources are developed to support board training and implementation specific to the revised curriculum. These sessions ensure common understanding and consistent messages about curriculum revisions and expectations for implementation.