

## Modifying Your Curriculum for New Standards

Promising Practices 5

### Program Puzzler

When the Aspire content standards were revised, each teacher in your program received a copy of the new content. In addition to this, your program keeps examples of activities in binders at the main site, and the administrator has purchased a series of textbooks for you to use. Teachers need to make sure instruction matches the standards while still maintaining their own teaching styles. Often, though, teachers do not know how to bring instruction, the program's materials, and the standards together in a way that will be flexible enough to work in the classroom. How could teachers be helped?

### Peer Perspective

#### Professional Development

- Use a comprehensive approach, including: support from coworkers; program peers; and regional, state, and national colleagues.
  - Become familiar with state materials and guidelines (e.g., standards, benchmarks).
  - Establish a lead teacher in your program. This teacher could observe classes and provide feedback to other teachers. In addition, this teacher could invite teachers to observe his or her classroom in action.
  - Include coaching in your program's local professional development efforts.
  - Take advantage of locally-developed resources (e.g., lesson plan binders, alignments).
  - Visit another Aspire program. This could be a neighboring program, one with a similar set up to your own (e.g., similar program size, components offered).
  - Ask other programs to share their materials and gather standards correlations from online sources. Reviewing samples can be a good way to see how others translate requirements into practice.
  - Participate in Resource Center Network trainings and take advantage of resource center materials (e.g., sample lessons, book sets).
  - Review standards and support materials from other states (e.g., Arizona, Texas, Florida).

#### **Timely Tips**

Know that you are not alone. Start a curriculum committee in your program. This way as a team you can make decisions about materials and standards. This may be a good way to share instructional techniques and other ideas too.

Review the Aspire Professional Development (PD) catalog to identify trainings focusing on linking standards, lessons, and materials.

### Added Insights

What is your definition of curriculum? Make sure you understand your program's definition of curriculum and its curriculum development process.

According to research, a program's curriculum design should be organized, focused on higher-level thinking, and learner-centered. A program's curriculum development process should include periodic reviews to make sure it is meeting student needs; the curriculum should be constantly monitored and modified as needed.

- Help teachers establish contact with other teachers in nearby Aspire program. Provide times for the teacher to call or otherwise communicate with area Aspire teachers, and encourage the teacher to do so. (*Program Administrator's Sourcebook*, National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, 2005)