

Testimony To: House Education Committee on Education

Respectfully Submitted by: Megan Grube, Assistant Superintendent of Maple Run Unified School District

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Topic: Implementation of Curriculum in School Districts and Supervisory Unions

Hello, thank you for having me here today. My name is Megan Grube and I am the Assistant Superintendent of Maple Run Unified School District. Prior to this, I was the Curriculum Director for Grand Isle Supervisory Union for nine years. Additionally, I teach a Curriculum Leader Academy that supports new and aspiring Curriculum Directors in a variety of systems.

I was asked to speak about my experience with curriculum implementation in both a supervisory union and school district setting. I want to start by providing some context to “curriculum”. We all have our own definitions and experiences with this word. I aim to provide a few anchors for my testimony today.

Purpose of a Coordinated Curriculum

A coordinated curriculum allows us to get incredibly clear about the learning outcomes for all of our students. It is a promise to our communities that a student’s educational experience and results are not determined by their address or personal circumstances.

It is also one of the key pillars of implementing Act 173.

Definition of Curriculum

The first is from the Act 173 Coordinated Curriculum Guidance Document published by the Agency of Education on October 14, 2020.

On page 3 it states:

“Curriculum, therefore, is not just a scope-and-sequencing of skills and content, but how those skills and content lead to the desired outcome of proficiency, as well as how specific activities in the classroom or course align with the development of those skills and content. Accordingly, we define curriculum as the umbrella for the integration of the content, concepts, skills, and process by which students achieve proficiency.

At Maple Run School District, we reference Robert Marzano’s work on [Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum](#):

“The guaranteed aspect of a guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC) requires all students enrolled in the same class, course, or grade level be exposed to the same rigorous curriculum regardless of the teacher to whom they are assigned”

“The viable aspect of a GVC recognizes that teaching the curriculum and covering the curriculum are two very different things. While teachers can cover a lot of content, to teach the

curriculum requires students learn what teachers teach. If the amount of content for which teachers are responsible exceeds what they can reasonably teach within the time allotted, the curriculum is not viable.”

At the center of a coordinated curriculum are educators who must constantly make decisions and agree and align with one another. It is not as simple as having a program or a unit plan, because those leave room for interpretation. It takes consistent, concerted focus, effort and time to create the conditions that enable educators to do this together.

Necessary Resources and Conditions

In order for the promise of a true coordinated, guaranteed and viable curriculum to take root, there are many supporting and unseen factors that create favorable conditions necessary in a school system. These include, but are not limited to:

- a) Collective Commitment and Vision
- b) Common Direction, Goals and Agreements
- c) Clear Decision Making and Input Processes
- d) Human Resources
- e) Funding
- f) Consistent Policies and Procedures about Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment
- g) Deep teacher expertise
- h) Cross-school collaboration
- i) Strong leadership
- j) Equal Access to High Quality Instructional Materials
- k) On-Going Needs Based Professional Learning

Experience at MRUSD

I am new to the district as of July 1, 2025, but one of the reasons why I wanted to work at Maple Run was because they are a consolidated PK-12 district that established the conditions for the schools to deliver on the purpose and promise of a coordinated curriculum with data to back it up. By the end of each school year for the last two years, there were no statistically significant gaps in performance among different schools and demographic categories.

Maple Run serves about 2600 students in PK-12 with three PK-8 campuses, a high school, and a Northwest Career and Technical Center.

Condition	Examples of Conditions at MRUSD
Collective Commitment and Vision	One board, one strategic plan, collective ownership over all MRUSD students, whole leadership team contributes to monitoring and reporting out on the district vision together
Common Direction, Goals and Agreements	Leadership team focuses on what to implement in all schools and how to implement it. Common agreements on required PD, instructional minutes, instructional materials and assessments

Clear Decision Making and Input Processes	Superintendent reports to the board, everyone else reports up to the superintendent
Human Resources	Ability to share roles, reassign people according to needs, and for principals to collaborate during budget season to maintain staffing
Funding	One budget can absorb changes in student population more flexibly and spread the impact equitably
Consistent Policies and Procedures about Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	One board with a policy committee which includes community members and board members. Policies support the priorities in the strategic plan
Deep teacher expertise	Teacher retention rate-98% last year Budgets historically passing and competitive wages
Cross-School Collaboration	District Early Release for K-8 buildings provides time for groups of educators to align across and within buildings. Strong commitment to teacher leader committees brings alignment and voice to the work.
Strong Leadership	The superintendent has 1 board to report to and fewer board meetings per month. Principals rarely interface directly with boards allowing for more time focusing on student and staff needs.
Equal Access to High Quality Instructional Materials	Common agreements about programs and commitment to continual investment in instructional resources. History of budgets passing and effective fiscal management
On-Going Needs Based Professional Learning	High teacher retention allows for professional learning to make it into practice. One budget can provide increased consistency in the amount of money available for professional learning contracts and stipends for work outside of the contracted year. A common release time schedule and commitment to release time gives guaranteed collaboration time for educators.

Experience at GISU

During my time at GISU, we did work to coordinate curriculum at the Supervisory Union level. In order to establish the conditions stated above, there were additional layers of complexity. We served about 550 students PK-8 across our member districts with choice starting at 7th grade for one district and 9th grade for the other two.

Condition	Examples of Conditions at GISU
Collective Commitment and Vision	<p>Each board set their own goals, eventually with stable Superintendent leadership and ground up visioning and goal setting, they supported the vision and direction of the SU.</p> <p>Commitment was to the students in the member district first, then students in broader SU.</p>
Common Direction, Goals and Agreements	<p>In order to move forward on SU goals, they had to be presented to every board. A board could choose not to support SU level work or prioritize different work for their district. Schools knew which high schools their students tended to attend and wanted to align expectations with those high schools, which varied.</p>
Clear Decision Making and Input Processes	<p>In some districts, the choices and focus of the board were not aligned with the priorities and direction of the SU. Principals often felt confusion about who they reported to: their district board or the Superintendent. Principals also could feel isolated if their board required them to do something that others did not have to do. In addition, they had to attend all board meetings and report out individually.</p>
Human Resources	<p>Teacher contracts were at the school/member district level, not SU, meaning we could not share human resources across member districts impacting their ability to deliver on required programming.</p>
Funding	<p>There was variable support for budgets depending on the community. This meant that some communities continually had to cut programming and positions while others maintained or could increase opportunities.</p> <p>A board would not pay their assessment to the SU for a period of time which impacted programming, payroll, and essential services for students for a period of time.</p>

Consistent Policies and Procedures about Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	Every policy had to be approved at every member district board and the SU. Member districts could pass different policies than the SU. Fortunately, this did not happen in the curriculum, instruction and assessment realm, but there were some policies that could have gone either way.
Deep teacher expertise	There was high teacher turnover in many of the member districts. Recruitment was difficult and we had many people in key positions with provisional licenses.
Cross-School Collaboration	Most educators were “singletons” in their school, meaning they had no grade level peers with whom they could collaborate and they operated in silos. Also, school configurations where there were multi-age teachers or splits at different grades in different schools, often lead to educators having to choose between which SU group to attend not getting all of their collaboration needs met. One district’s world language teacher had no collaborative peers due to unfilled or cut positions.
Strong Leadership	Within my first three years, we had three different superintendents. Stated reasons for why the first two left were related to the board structures or board dynamics. Leadership change at the highest level impacted whether ideas and priorities from prior years continued. In my nine years, building leadership in each member district turned over 3 times, superintendent 4 times, and Director of Student Support Services 3 times.
Equal Access to High Quality Instructional Materials	We were able to provide high quality instructional materials to all schools by leveraging ESSER funds. Had we needed to use local funds to support the initial costs, we would have had to get every board to agree to budget for the costs or to assume a higher assessment from the SU if we purchased at that level.
On-Going Needs Based Professional Learning	High teacher turnover meant a need for on-going costs of program training. It was hard to get into consistent deeper levels of professional learning and expertise.

To close, a coordinated curriculum is not simply a document, a program, or simply standards. It is a collective commitment of everyone in an organization—boards, community, leaders, support staff, professional staff and more— to ensure that we are incredibly clear and aligned on the learning outcomes our students will achieve so we can deliver on the promise that a student’s outcomes are not reliant on their address or life circumstances. System conditions, like the ones stated above, can facilitate the work, or, conversely, prevent, stall, or stop our ability to deliver on that promise. Thank you for your time.