



## Steps for Prioritizing Standards

Adapted from: Power Standards: Identifying the Standards that Matter the Most and Common Formative Assessments: How Teacher Teams Intentionally Align Standards, Instruction, and Assessment by Larry Ainsworth.

1. Read the article, The Safety Net Curriculum. Identify and discuss the need for prioritization.
2. Identify an agreed upon Criteria for Prioritization.
3. Select a content area (such as language arts).
4. Select a section or domain (such as reading).
5. Divide teacher groups into grade level bands (can be K-1; 2-3; 4-5). It is better to have groups of 2-5 to work together than for anyone to work alone.
6. Have each group select one grade level in the grade level band.
7. Review how the standards ‘work’ by identifying the intention of the standards and the organizational framework used when writing the standards of that specific domain/content area.
8. Review the agreed upon Criteria for Prioritization.
9. Take 5 minutes to **individually** mark standards that are “absolutely essential” for the identified domain
10. In grade level bands, compare the “absolutely essential” choices and reach consensus.
11. In grade level bands, consult district and state testing information guides and/or test data and revise selections.
12. Have grade level bands work together to create a chart that represents the “absolutely essential” standards for individual grades for the identified domain.
13. Have grade level bands repeat the process for all of the grades identified in their band. For example, if a group of 3 people was assigned to the K-2 band and analyzed the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade standards, now that group should repeat the process and identify the “absolutely essential” standards for grades K-1 as well.
14. Post all of the grade level “absolutely essential” standards charts in order around the room. The chart should include the standard number and a brief summary of the identified “absolutely essential” standards.
15. Have each grade span share out the reasoning behind their selection of their “absolutely essential” for each grade level. As groups share, pay close attention to the gaps, overlaps and omissions. The purpose of this time is also to ensure that the standards identified build vertically.

1. Gap – a standard that needs to be taught in more than one grade that is missing from a particular grade’s list
  2. Overlap – a standard that is being redundantly taught in two or three grades that could be thoroughly taught in only one grade?
  3. Omission – a standard that is likely to be state-tested that is completely missing from two or more grades
16. Revise the charts to reflect the conversations of the group, identifying the first draft of the priority standards for this content area section.
  17. Now that priority standards are identified, sequence standards so there is a logical progression. While the standard does not change, perhaps the time of year when the standard is taught for depth of understanding does. This might mean numbering them according to which ones you think should be taught first, second, and so on.
  18. Develop an action plan with the involvement of stakeholders.
    1. What is the next step?
    2. What content area will be discussed next?
    3. How will this information be introduced to other teachers, principals, or school/district staff?
    4. How will this information impact the Biliteracy Maps you have already created?

Resources:

Ainsworth, L. (2003) Power standards: Identifying the standards that matter the most. Englewood, CO: Learn + Lead Press.

Ainsworth, L. (2015). Common formative assessments: How teacher teams intentionally align standards, instruction, and assessment. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

