

# New Curriculum Info

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## Why is curriculum changing?

Today we live in a state of constant change. It is a technology-rich world, where communication is instant and information is immediately accessible. The way we interact with each other personally, socially, and at work has changed forever. Knowledge is growing and information is changing extremely quickly, creating new possibilities. This is the world our students are entering.

British Columbia's curriculum is being modernized to respond to this demanding world. To develop new models, the Ministry consulted with education experts both locally and internationally. They agree that to prepare students for the future, the curriculum must be student-centred and flexible, and maintain a focus on literacy and numeracy, while supporting deeper learning.

What and how we teach our students has been redesigned to provide greater flexibility for teachers, while allowing space and time for students to develop their skills and explore their passions and interests. The deep understanding and application of knowledge is at the centre of the new model, as opposed to the memory and recall of facts that previously shaped education around the globe for many decades.

Our new curriculum maintains a focus on sound foundations of literacy and numeracy.

Every student will continue to be connected to the basics of reading, writing and math. These critical skills are the foundation of B.C.'s education system, and are a key component of developing an educated citizen.

B.C. students are at the centre of these changes, and ensuring their success continues to be our driving force.

## Key Features of the New Curriculum

Essential learning, literacy and numeracy foundations, and core competencies are the base of our new curriculum. All three contribute to deeper learning.

### Core Competencies

The core competencies are the intellectual, personal, and social skills that all students need to develop for success in life beyond school. B.C. has identified three core competencies as essential for all learners:

- Communication
- Thinking
- Personal and social competency

Core competencies are directly related to students becoming educated citizens. [Read about the core competencies, including profiles and illustrations.](#)

# Literacy and Numeracy Foundations

Literacy is the ability to understand, critically analyze, and create a variety of forms of communication, including oral, written, visual, digital, and multimedia, to accomplish one's goals. Literacy helps students apply reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across a variety of subject areas.

Numeracy is the ability to understand and apply mathematical concepts, processes, and skills to solve problems and make decisions in a variety of situations, including real-life scenarios. Numeracy assessment looks at learning which has taken place throughout the student's education, not only in mathematics, but across various subjects.

Literacy and Numeracy are fundamental to all learning. While they are commonly associated with language learning and mathematics, literacy and numeracy are applied in all areas of learning.

## Curriculum Model

All areas of learning are based on a "Know-Do-Understand" model to support a concept-based competency-driven approach to learning.

Three elements, the Content (Know), Curricular Competencies (Do), and Big Ideas (Understand) all work together to support deeper learning.



### Content (Know)

The content learning standards — the "Know" of the know-do-understand model of learning — detail the essential topics and knowledge at each grade level.

### Curricular Competencies (Do)

The curricular competencies are the skills, strategies, and processes that students develop over time. They reflect the "do" in the know-do-understand model of learning. While curricular competencies are more subject-specific, they are connected to the core competencies.

### Big Ideas (Understand)

The big ideas consist of generalizations and principles and the key concepts important in an area of learning. They reflect the "understand" component of the know-do-understand model of learning.

The big ideas represent what students will understand at the completion of the curriculum for their grade. They are intended to endure beyond a single grade and contribute to future understanding.

# Concept-based, Competency-driven Curriculum

B.C.'s new curriculum brings together two features that most educators agree are essential for 21st-century learning: a concept-based approach to learning, and a focus on the development of competencies, to foster deeper, more transferable learning.

These approaches complement each other because of their common focus on active engagement of students. Deeper learning is better achieved through “doing” than through passive listening or reading. Similarly, both concept-based learning and the development of competencies engage students in authentic tasks that connect learning to the real world.

## Flexible Learning Environments

Learning can take place anywhere, not just in classrooms. Many schools and teachers create learning environments that explore the use of time and space in creative ways. The integration of areas of learning and technology also have opened the door for teachers and schools to approach the use of time and space in creative ways – ways that adapt to students’ needs and interests.

Although the learning standards are described within areas of learning, there is no requirement for teachers to organize classrooms, schools or instruction in this manner. In effect, the Ministry of Education defines the “what” to teach but not the “how” to organize the time, space or methods to teach it.

The focus on personalization and the flexible structure of the curriculum support the configuration of combined grade classrooms. Classes of students of more than one grade provide opportunities for teachers to develop a mindset that sees all the students as a group of learners with a range of needs and interests. Multi-grade programs should find a comfortable fit with the curriculum.

## Additional Resources

The [curriculum search tool](#) allows teachers to search for key words or select key elements from specific grades or areas of learning

The results of the search can be exported into a Word document for editing or printing.

This flexibility supports teachers to combine the learning standards in various ways. Teachers are encouraged to create courses, modules, thematic units or learning experiences that focus on students' needs and interests or local contexts.

## Supporting Information

- Introduction to BC’s Curriculum Redesign ([English](#)) ([Français](#)) (Aug. 2015)
- Curriculum Redesign Update (Summary of Feedback, Winter 2014) ([English](#)) ([Français](#))
- [Exploring Curriculum Design](#) (Jan. 2013)
- [Defining Cross Curricular Competencies](#) (Jan. 2013)
- [Enabling Innovation: Transforming Curriculum and Assessment](#) (Aug. 2012)