



# Why Map?

How curriculum mapping with Atlas supports leaders, educators, and students



Curriculum mapping addresses some of the most critical questions for any work team:

**Who is doing what?**

**How does our work align with our goals?**

**Are we operating efficiently and effectively?**

(JACOBS, 2004)

Engaging in the curriculum mapping process and **effectively managing curriculum** can help schools create a culture of ongoing curriculum development and review that:

- meets the needs of **leadership and administration**,
- supports **teachers** in their instruction,
- improves the learning experience of **students**.

## What is Curriculum Mapping?

**Curriculum mapping** is the process of documenting intended student learning outcomes, learning plans, and assessment evidence across entire courses and academic programs. Education researchers **Wiggins and McTighe**, followed by **Heidi Hayes Jacobs** and **H. Lynn Erikson**, articulated best practices and processes for curriculum mapping and leveraging curriculum mapping tools like Atlas.

### ➤ Consistency

Documenting curriculum allows for **consistency in curriculum** structure, adopted standards, expectations, learning outcomes, and more across a single school or large organization.

### ➤ Collaboration

Documenting curriculum allows educators to **collaborate across classrooms** to develop their curriculum maps and to see what is being taught across grade levels and subject areas.

### ➤ Reflection

Documenting curriculum allows educators to **reflect on the quality of curriculum** through the mapping process, regular curriculum review cycles, and data reporting.

### ➤ Student Outcomes

**Students benefit** from organized curriculum held to a high expectation, teachers who work together, and malleable, living curriculum. And, students benefit when teachers are empowered.



For **administrators and leaders**, curriculum mapping provides transparent access to what is being taught in classrooms.



This transparency offers leaders and coaches valuable insight into the details of the curriculum being offered to students. The comprehensive **reporting capabilities** of Atlas offer views of quality and completion of curriculum maps, understanding data, and integration of curricular initiatives or areas of focus.

Mapping a documented curriculum is a key step toward satisfying **accreditation reporting requirements**. Schools, districts, and dioceses consolidate their curriculum, and customize the formatting, visibility and access to these maps in coordination with accreditation bodies for a seamless accreditation cycle.

Creating and maintaining a documented curriculum ensures **maintenance of institutional knowledge**. As faculty fluctuates with each academic year, momentum does not need to slow to onboard or recreate curriculum maps for new teachers.

Most importantly, the curriculum mapping and review processes **promote conversations** among teachers about their individual interpretations of curriculum, keeping the curricula of schools dynamic and current. These conversations can create and promote a shared, unified understanding of what the curriculum is and what it is supposed to accomplish.

Atlas offers **Professional Development** focused specifically **Leadership & Process** to support the successful implementation of a new curriculum process.



A centralized, documented curriculum provides visibility for **teachers** across grade levels and content areas within their school.

**Workload** continues to be a primary consideration for the support of teachers. When given the tools, teachers can devote valuable time to building upon curriculum work, not starting from scratch at the beginning of each year.



Being able to provide teachers with a curriculum to teach is particularly powerful support for **new or novice teachers** as they acclimate to the new school and role.

The curriculum mapping process can provide a **balance** between aligning curriculum across subject areas or grade levels and **protecting teacher autonomy**. Providing a unified framework facilitates the creation of an aligned curriculum, and lets teachers apply their pedagogical expertise in delivering the curriculum in their classrooms.

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Those professional conversations create a natural condition for the evolution of knowledge about the most successful practices for improving student learning

(JACOBS, 2004)

The **reporting** made possible by a centralized and unified curriculum can drive collaborative conversations about **aligning** and **scaffolding** courses, **reflection** and **review**, and use of assessment data to **inform instruction**.

**Maintenance of institutional knowledge**, allowing teachers to build on individual and collaborative work over years serves both new and veteran teachers, preserving the work they've contributed to the school community.



Mapping curriculum is a crucial first step in providing **students** with a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

Students benefit when there is a unified experience across a school ecosystem.

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When teachers don't know the sequence of the curriculum across students' years of schooling, students have a disjointed experience.

**Rather than each year's work resting on the work of the previous year, students often experience each year as a new event.**

(JACOBS, 2004)

Engaging in the ongoing process of curriculum mapping gives students a **current and dynamic curriculum** that is vertically and horizontally aligned. It also gives teachers a consistent opportunity to document curricular changes and decisions based on student data.



Atlas offers **Professional Development** focused specifically **Curriculum Development, Curriculum Review, and Instructional Approaches** to support the meaningful use of Atlas to increase student outcomes.

## References

- Erickson, H. L., & Lanning, L. A. (2014). *Transitioning to concept-based curriculum and instruction: How to bring content and process together*. Corwin.
- Jacobs, H. H. (Ed.). (2004). *Getting Results with Curriculum Mapping*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design, Expanded 2nd Edition*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.