

What Standards and Curriculum Look Like

NEA believes that every student can succeed, no matter their zip code, if they have access to the seven Great Public Schools criteria, including high-quality standards and curricula. The link between high standards and career- and college-ready students is made possible via a complete, holistic curriculum. A rich curriculum provides every student with access to advanced courses in mathematics and science, classes in the fine arts, additional supports to those farther behind, and time to sharpen critical skills in self-monitoring and self-control during physical education.

The Great Public Schools Standards and Curriculum Indicators reflect NEA's commitment to high-quality public schools. They are: integrated and continuous curriculum development, comprehensive curriculum content, appropriate instructional services, and accommodation and differentiation.

For more information on what makes a great public school, please visit:

www.nea.org/gpsindicators



Is Your School a Great Public School?

Standards and Curriculum

Series 4 of 7



A Great Education

As students progress during the school year, it is essential that they are provided all the resources and supports they need to succeed.



A quality education begins with access to an exemplary early childhood education and continues with development of students socially, emotionally, and cognitively, preparing them for college and 21st-century careers. The bridge from early childhood education to graduation is only made possible with:

- High standards and a rigorous curriculum;

- Teaching and learning conditions conducive to engagement and enrichment;

- Educators of the highest quality;

- Valid assessments;

- Engaged families and community; and,

- Sufficient funding for advanced courses, modern materials and facilities, and educator professional development.



Great Public Schools Indicators Framework

The National Education Association's Great Public Schools (GPS) Indicators Framework elaborates on the seven criteria fundamental to a quality education and calls on all educators, families, community leaders, and policy makers to join the effort to ensure that every student has access to a great public school. Together, we can achieve greatness. Here we focus on one of the seven criteria required for student success—Standards and Curriculum.

Standards and Curriculum

A great public school ensures that all students have the opportunity to develop every facet of their talents and skills, harnessing their full potential and engaging in higher-order, multisensory tasks. Integral to this are high standards and a rigorous curriculum. Lamentably, the current state of affairs could not be further away from this. The Civil Rights Data Collection snapshot on College and Career Readiness reports that only 50 percent of high schools offer calculus, only 63 percent offer physics, and 25 percent of high schools with the highest percentage of Black and Latino students do not offer Algebra II.

In short, opportunities have not been equitably distributed across the country, and we are forfeiting the chance to close the achievement gap. Research shows that when expectations are raised and opportunities are provided to all students, even the most vulnerable can achieve and succeed. The new global economy needs our schools to produce students who are career-ready, possess 21st-century skills, and have had the benefit of a full and enriching curriculum.

How You Can Advocate for a Great Public School—Standards and Curriculum

Essential Pieces

Integrated and Continuous Curriculum Development

Comprehensive Curriculum Content

Appropriate Instructional Services

Accommodation and Differentiation

Action Steps

Ask your school principal if school resources (e.g., textbooks, technology) have been updated to guarantee that students are learning and meeting high standards.

Ask your school principal if all courses are aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

Request that your school principal offer courses in the fine arts and provide 150 minutes of physical education to all elementary grade levels, 250 minutes for middle and high school.

Ask your student's teacher if they think professional learning is aligned with school standards, curriculum, and assessments.

Request that your school principal implement Response to Intervention (RTI).

Request that your school principal implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Request that your school principal implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)/Positive Behavior Supports (PBS).