



## Lower Kuskokwim School District

# Instructional Framework Overview

Overview	2
General Information	2
Curriculum	2
Instruction	2
Response to Instruction & Intervention	3
Data and Assessment	3
Grading	3
School Climate and Connectedness	4
Special Education	4
Special Education Department	4
Academic	4
College and Career Ready	5
Graduation Planning	5
High School Scheduling	5
School Improvement Planning	5

## Overview

This is a living document that provides an overview of the Lower Kuskokwim School District Instructional Framework along with more detailed documents to assist educators in implementing the framework. Each section includes a quick overview of key concepts along with a list of attached supporting documents for deeper understanding. Educators new to the district are encouraged to read through each overview, while all educators are expected to use the framework as a resource for their work.

## General Information

The Instructional Framework serves as a guide for “how we do business” in LKSD. Teaching is not a precise science, but through years of collaborative work and research, what is presented here is determined to be the best practices and procedures for our student population. Everything we do in LKSD is interrelated, and as such, no single part of the Framework should be interpreted in isolation.

## Curriculum

“Curriculum” refers to **what** we teach to students. It is a response to the question, “*What do we want students to know and be able to do?*”

In the state of Alaska we are required to teach the content and processes defined in Alaska English Language Arts Standards and Alaska Math Standards (2012), as well as Alaska State Content and Performance Standards for other curricular areas (2006). In 2015, the Next Generation Science Standards were released.

StoryTown Reading, TCI Alive, Second Step, Everyday Math, etc. are examples of tools or materials we use to teach the curriculum. They are not the curriculum. The materials are intended to be used to the degree they focus on the current standards and the needs of students. It is important to use the student text and teacher's guide as resources for student learning. **It is possible you will not teach some sections of the text as the new standards focus on depth with essential concepts and thinking processes rather than coverage of all possible ideas.** It is likely that you will need to supplement your materials to make the required shifts in instruction demanded by the new standards.

## Instruction

LKSD employs a standards-based model wherein schools are organized around the acceleration of students through established essential targets, and the premise that when adults organize around the needs of the students, student achievement increases.

According to *Results Now*, by Mike Schmoker (2006), the single most decisive factor in student learning is the teacher in the classroom. *HOW* a teacher teaches is critical. The more “at risk” the student, the more critical the “how” of teaching becomes.

Our *how* in LKSD is designed to enhance learning of all students in a bilingual culture. The strategies and techniques are made explicit in *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model*. Each teacher new to the District receives a copy of the book and brief overview. They then attend a full day in-service about implementing SIOP in the classroom and the use of the Observational Protocol.

While the book and what is in it (8 components of instruction with 32 features) is important to know, far more critical is that the information ***be applied to teaching in the classroom.***

Good SIOP teaching is both intentional and carefully planned. Sheltered instruction has a positive impact on student learning when it is used 85% of the instructional time with best practices.

## Response to Instruction & Intervention

Core instructional materials are focused on grade level instruction. Every student should have the opportunity to receive instruction at his/her grade level. If students are placed in a Tier III replacement program at any point, it constitutes a temporary replacement of core curriculum. Secondary students in grade 7-12 receive core instruction through discrete courses, though some selection and/or sequencing may be used as part of an RTI plan. By policy, a student who is 16 must be promoted to high school (9th grade).

Students who fall behind grade level in reading and mathematics will receive instruction as defined in the LKSD RTI Matrices for Reading and Math (below).

## Data and Assessment

Assessment practices play a role in both instruction and curriculum. **As a result of assessment**, we know our instruction has worked so students are able to use and apply what they know to new situations; or **we know what to teach next**. There are assessments that inform and evaluate HOW we teach, and assessments that inform and evaluate WHAT we teach.

The following are the current assessment tools employed in LKSD: AIMSweb , Yugtun CBMs, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Alaska Measure of Performance (AMP) (FY16 only), WIDA ACCESS for ELLs, Yugtun Performance Test (YPT), quarterly report cards, diagnostic assessments, chapter and unit tests. Workkeys or ACT are also required at the high school level at this time (refer to your school counselor for information on ACT). Go to <https://education.alaska.gov/AKAssessments/#c3gtabs-amp> for more information on AMP.

## Grading

The School Board believes that students and parents/guardians have the right to receive course grades that represent an accurate evaluation of the student's achievement. Teachers shall evaluate a student's work in relation to standards that apply to all students at his/her grade level, not in relation to the work of other students in one particular class.

Grades should be based on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of the student's work and his/her mastery of course content and objectives as demonstrated through assignments, tests, as well as classroom participation.

In the near future, the grading practices for K-6 will be reassessed. Teams will be working to research best practices in grading. The proposed system will be brought to the Site Administrator group and then to the LKSD School Board for approval.

Below are links to current AR 5121 regarding grading, and newly adopted secondary grading practices.

## School Climate and Connectedness

LKSD has long demonstrated a commitment to build a positive and engaging environment for students and parents through venues such as sports programs, academic club and competitions, student leadership opportunities, family nights, performing arts, Yupik dance events, and many other school and district-developed programs. However, the most important way to increase the level of student engagement and community support is through teachers who consistently inspire students with stimulating lessons and an engaging learning environment, in a positive, caring classroom.

## Special Education

### Special Education Department

#### RTI AND THE REFERRAL PROCESS

While the Special Education Department of LKSD fully supports the RTI process, we recognize that there are always exceptions. In the case of students with a suspected disability, it is necessary to take additional steps to ensure these students get the support and accommodations necessary to help them succeed in the general education classroom (least restrictive environment) to the fullest extent possible.

Ideally, there would be a fluid process for documenting interventions along each step of the RTI process that would lead to a referral for Special Education Services for students who do not sufficiently respond to the Tier I, II and III interventions. However, until the district transitional period of three to five years has been completed, there are far too many students in interventions to require detailed documentation on each student in every tier prior to referral, especially in grades three and up.

Therefore, the Special Education Department of the Lower Kuskokwim School District has developed a transitional referral process to be used in the interim that we feel aligns with the district vision and RTI Matrix.

#### TRANSITIONAL REFERRAL PLAN

In an attempt to align with the district RTI process while still providing services and support for students identified as having a possible learning difficulties, the following standard protocol will be used for referring students who are continuing to have difficulty despite participation in interventions.

## Academic

#### K- 2 (3) TRANSITIONAL REFERRAL PLAN

Students in grades K – 3 who have never been retained should be given the opportunity to participate in general education curriculum with their same-aged peers and, if data deems necessary, work their way through the RTI process before considering referral for special services. For students suspected of having a possible academic disability in these grades, teachers should use the RTI process beginning with Tier I core differentiation and advance through the RTI process, as data deems necessary. However, due to the importance of early intervention, if there is a student in third grade with significant academic concerns, the RTI team may need to investigate the appropriateness of referring a student with academic abilities that are significantly below (two years or more) their current classmates in one or more areas.

#### 3) – 12 TRANSITIONAL REFERRAL PLAN

For students in grade three who have been retained one or more years, and students in grade four or up (retained or not): If screening data and/or classroom formative and summative assessments support that the student is three or more years behind same-aged peers, the intervention process should be

started. Your site special education teacher should be notified, a Tier III meeting held, and a Tier III intervention plans should be made to place the student in a replacement curriculum with supports in the area(s) of difficulty. LKSD Tier III RTI procedures are to be followed and documented for no less than one full semester before considering a referral. If, after intensive Tier III interventions, the data shows that interventions have been implemented with at least 90% consistency and the student is not improving, or the rate of improvement is not sufficient to close the gap as outlined in the RTI model (minimum of 1.5 years growth for one year of intervention), a referral should be made.

In this case, all Tier I & II data and accompanying documentation is waived, as the student most likely was directly placed in Tier III due to screening scores per district transition RTI policy. Tier III data must be completed according to the protocol and include all other data listed on the Documentation Checklist for Referral form and attached to the Referral for Special Educational Services form.

### **SPEECH, INTENSIVE AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

There are always exceptions in any situation, and the referral process is not intended to keep students who need early intervention services on hold until third or fourth grade. We are all professionals, and if you see a significant disability, it should be reported immediately. If you are not sure what qualifies as a significant disability, please work with your site Special Education Teacher and related service providers to ensure we are providing the best education possible to all of our students.

## **College and Career Ready**

Vision: Every Student with a Goal and the Skills, Knowledge, and Confidence to Pursue that Goal  
The College and Career Ready Department of LKSD includes: career and technical education, distance delivery, college and career school counseling, dual credit course offerings, and high school academic programs.

It is our mission to provide students with the support, guidance, and opportunities to investigate and prepare for life after high school. Our students need opportunities to explore careers as well as the opportunities to build the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to set a goal for after high school and set forth on a path to achieve that goal.

To achieve this vision, LKSD College and Career Ready department strives to make sure that every LKSD high school student has the opportunity to explore their interests, quality education in core academic courses, access to college-prep or industry-prep courses, and the support and counseling in planning for their future.

## **Graduation Planning**

This section describes the board philosophy on high school graduation. The board believes all students should plan a high school path that includes courses beyond the requirements, this section defines requirements and provides guidance on additional courses to meet individual needs.

## **High School Scheduling**

Please view high school scheduling documents to assist in creating class schedules and ensuring that all graduation and LKSD requirements are met.

## **School Improvement Planning**

LKSD believes in a data driven cycle of improvement which is followed at multiple levels.