Branford Board of Education Teaching and Learning Committee

March 13, 2024

Strategic Coherence Plan (SCP)

Strategic Actions

1. **Ensure equal opportunity for growth and development for all Branford students.**

2. Align the key systems in the District to support the student acquisition of the Global Learning Competencies through the implementation of the Definition of Deep Learning.

3. Improve the process and tools used to communicate and engage critical stakeholders.

Definition of Deep Learning

- Focuses on intrinsic motivation, passion and reason as the drivers of the pursuit of learning

- Provides ongoing skills development and recognition of progress along the way

- Includes hands-on learning by doing and practice

- Incorporates mentoring, feedback and support through all aspects of the learning process.

- Requires appropriate resources to facilitate learning

- Flourishes within a culture of optimism and support

Strategy Mapping

Why Strategy Maps?

- Help to communicate the district or school's commitment to equitable access, experiences, and outcomes for all students *and the plan to actually attain those opportunities and outcomes*
- Are clear and logical: show how the action of the superintendent would lead to work by leaders and teachers that would lead to improved outcomes for all students
- Include capacity building for leaders and teachers as an essential component, not an afterthought
- Make it clear the district is aligned in working toward meeting the needs of students
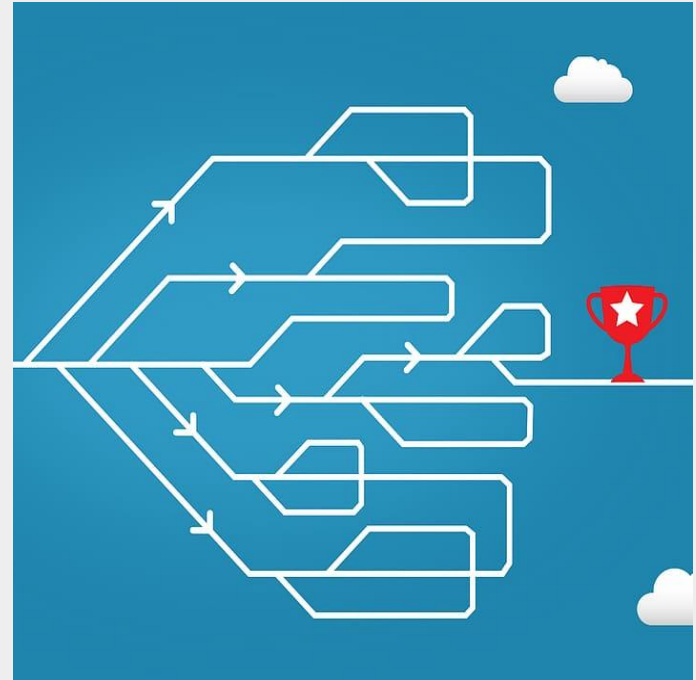
The Strategy Playbook for Educational Leaders:

Principles and Processes by Isobel Stevenson and Jennie M. Weiner

What is a Strategy Map?

- Visualizes a school or department's goals

- Fosters shared understanding

- Aids decision-making and resource allocation

- Changes over time as data informs next steps

- Enables all stakeholders to see themselves in the work

The Strategy Playbook for Educational Leaders;

Principles and Processes by Isobel Stevenson and Jennie M. Weiner

Backwards Design

Goal/Area of Focus:			Theory of Action: *big picture idea of what work will lead to the result you want to achieve.*				
Central Office Will	Principals will learn how to	Principals will	Instructional leaders will learn how to	Instructional leaders will	Teachers will learn how to	Teachers will	Students will know and be able to do

"When educators engage in backwards design approach to curriculum, they start with developing a very clear idea of the desired outcomes for all students and then figure out the work that needs to be done to make those outcomes a reality." - Wiggins and McTighe (2005) as referenced in Stevenson and Wiener 2021

Elementary Goal & Theory of Action

Goal/Area of Focus	Theory of Action
Questioning, Reasoning, & Problem Solving: Students will improve their problem solving skills in all content areas.	IF teachers facilitate more opportunities for productive struggle and meaningful discourse, THEN students will develop the skills necessary to persevere in complex problem solving.

Elementary Goal & Theory of Action

Teachers will learn	Teachers will	Students will learn
how to embed higher-level thinking questions to facilitate problem solving in their lessons	teach meaningful discourse strategies	problem solving strategies how to activate higher level thinking in order to create meaning and explain their ideas

Elementary Goal & Theory of Action

District admins will	Building admins will learn	Building admins will	Coaches will learn	Coaches will
provide feedback to building leaders re: problem solving, discourse, and productive struggle	questions to facilitate reflection around problem solving, discourse, and productive struggle	provide feedback to staff re: problem solving, discourse, and productive struggle	practices that promote productive struggle and meaningful discourse	transfer knowledge through PD and coaching cycles re: productive struggle and discourse

WIS Goal & Theory of Action

Goal/Area of Focus	Theory of Action
Collective self efficacy: reading across content areas (non-fiction reading)	If we create conditions to develop collective efficacy among all members of the learning community then they will be equipped to engage in productive struggle resulting in deeper learning.

BHS Goal & Theory of Action

Goal/Area of Focus	Theory of Action
Teachers and staff will implement high quality instruction rich in opportunities for inquiry and student discourse.	If we create an environment where all members take ownership in building a community, then students will feel a strong sense of belonging and engage in meaningful learning.

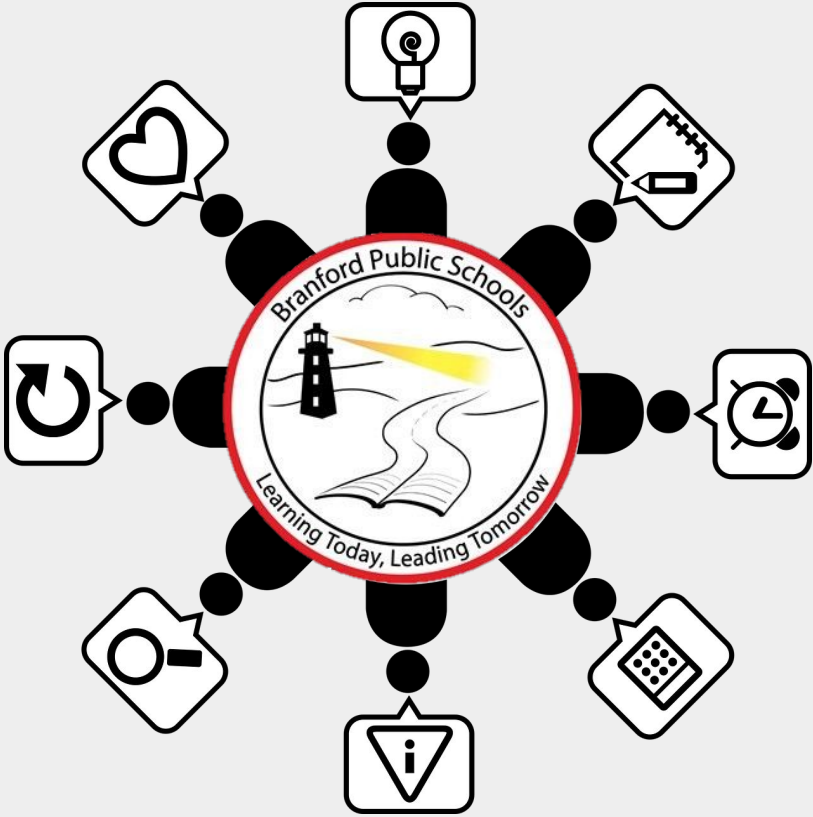# Alignment of Goals and Learning

**District &
School Goal**
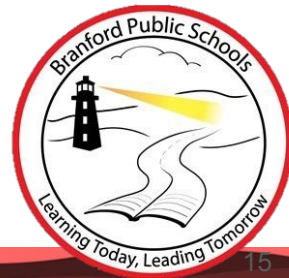
Students

**Professional
Learning**

**Department &
Teacher Goals**

Discussion

Advanced Placement U.S. History:

Textbook Adoption

Proposed Text Overview

TITLE: Fabric of A Nation: A History with Skills and Sources, Second Edition

AUTHOR: Jason Stacy & Matthew Ellington

PUBLISHER: Bedford, Freeman & Worth

COPYRIGHT DATE: 2024

COURSE (GRADE LEVELS): 10th, AP United States History (APUSH)

NUMBER OF BOOKS REQUESTED: 60 (30 hardcopy w/online; 30 online only)

COST PER BOOK (+online subscription): $153.98 (+$39.00) OR $141.98 for online only

TOTAL COST: $10,048.80

Rationale

- Current text has been used for several years and is insufficient

- Current text does not provide appropriate elaboration on key concepts and content for students to develop meaningful understandings of the importance of the history

- Fabric of A Nation (proposed text) is fully aligned to the AP US History Course Exam and Description and is written at an appropriate level for the students who take the course

Textbook Selection Committee Members

Sharon Shirley: APUSH teacher

Jim Carlson: Social Studies Instructional Coach

Katie Wagner: 5-12 Curriculum Coordinator

Grace Grammatico: 11th grade student, former APUSH student

**Dylan Hall:** 10th grade student, current APUSH student

Major Factors for Choice

- Fabric of A Nation is a well-written text with an appropriate readability level for sophomores who have not taken a humanities honors or AP class.

- It is carefully aligned to the AP US History Curriculum and Exam Description (CED), both in terms of content (key concepts, topics) and skills.

- It weaves in the historical thinking and reasoning skills identified in the CED within the modules, scaffolding skills development along the way.

- The Achieve platform allows online access to the text as well as to formative assessments that will help address the critical need for student self-assessment and goal setting and provide useful data for addressing whole-group and differentiated student learning needs.
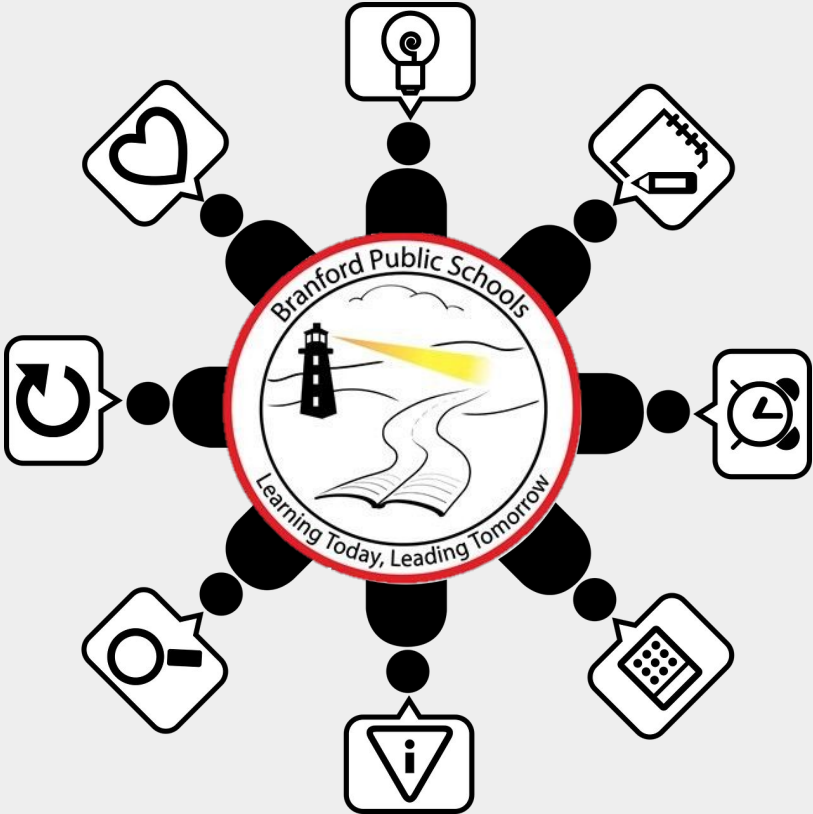
Correlation with State Frameworks

- The textbook, written by individuals closely involved with the CB APUSH program as scorers, question writers, and workshop consultants and who serve as a college history professor (Stacy) and veteran APUSH instructor (Ellington), is based on the College Board AP US History CED.

- This text aligns perfectly with the CED by Unit, Topic, Key Concepts, and Skills. It includes and goes well beyond the scope of the CT state frameworks for US History.

- The relevant pages of the CED used to determine alignment are here.
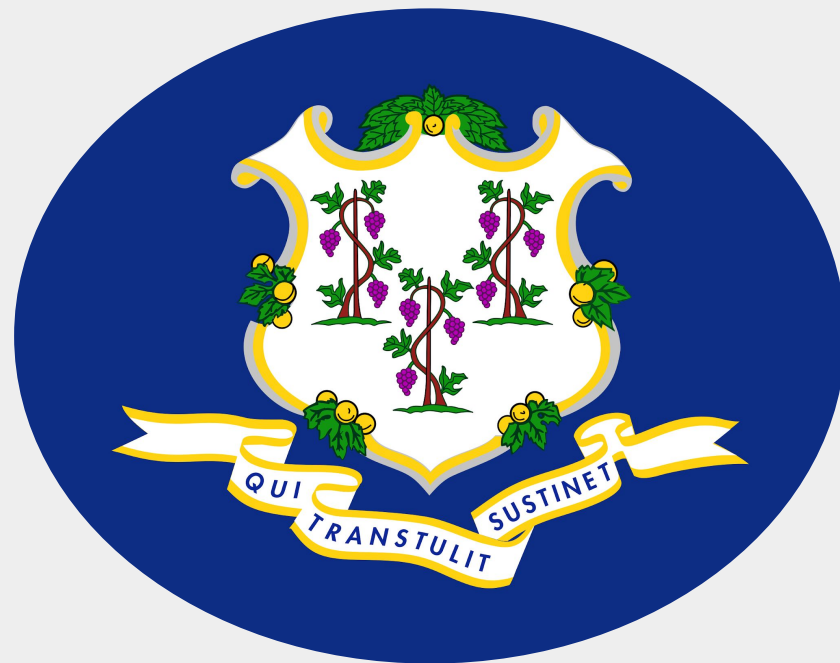
Discussion

HMH Into Reading:

Textbook Adoption
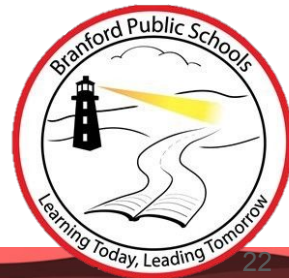
Proposed Text Overview

TITLE: Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading

AUTHOR: Shane Templeton, Kylene Beers, et al.

PUBLISHER: Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt

COPYRIGHT DATE: 2019

COURSE (GRADE LEVELS): K-4 Language Arts

NUMBER OF BOOKS REQUESTED: one per teacher, one per student

COST PER BOOK (+online subscription): varies by grade level

TOTAL COST: $437,000 (the cost for the first 5 years of implementation will be grant-funded from ARP, ESSER, the Right to Read Grant)

Rationale

- approved by the State Dept. of Ed. for use as a core Reading program
  - partial implementation by Sept., 2024, complete implementation by Sept., 2025
- aligns with BPS' [approach](#) for teaching elementary Reading
- after doing a "soft pilot" of 2 programs, teachers voted to expand the HMH pilot
  - all teachers, all grades (October, 2023-February, 2024)
- teachers and students were surveyed for feedback
  - 100% of teachers voted for HMH over the other program
- all approved programs are similar in content and approach
  - to keep piloting programs because this is a disservice to students and teachers
  - will write a complete curriculum to supplement any areas that are lacking
- team determined that HMH adoption would be best for BPS, to begin in September, 2024

Textbook Selection Committee Members

Elementary Curriculum Coordinator

Literacy Coaches and ELA Interventionists

One Classroom Teacher from Each Grade, Divided Across the 3 Schools

Special Education Teacher from Each Building

*This is the initial team, but all classroom teachers had the opportunity to vote between the two programs.

Major Factors for Choice

- comprehensive program; supports all Reading pillars
- aligned with Science of Reading research
- supports best practice with direct writing instruction
- instruction is organized around a diverse set of high-quality text sets
  - students get exposure to a wide range of genre
- materials support development of students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills
  - also improve critical thinking and build overall knowledge
- materials include resources to support differentiation at all levels of achievement
- includes companion materials to support the success of EL students

Correlation with State Frameworks

- In alignment with the Science of Reading

- Named by the Reading Leadership Implementation Council as an approved program

- 'Meets Expectations' on edreports.org
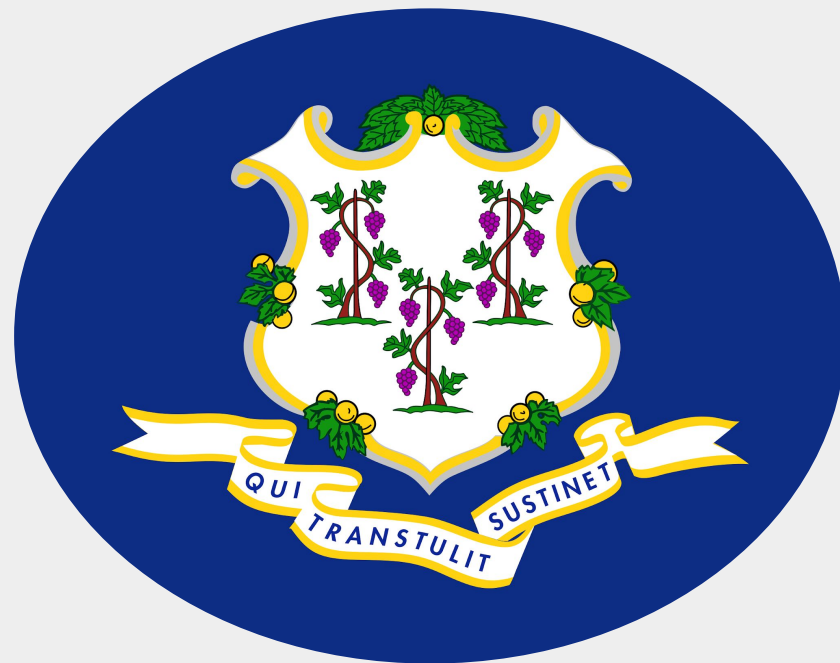
Professional Development Needed

- HMH will provide professional development on all aspects of implementation

- Teachers can also access individualized, on-demand professional development by HMH experts

Discussion