

## Session 1: Christian: How are we distinctively Christian?

### **Session 1 Objectives:**

- Build an overview of the seven Cs of curriculum planning and instruction
- Define and discuss what makes a Christian school distinctive

### **Session 1 Introduction:**

In this opening session, Dan sets the scene for sailing the “Seven Cs” of curriculum and instruction before launching into the first C. Christian schools have a unique mission. How they approach planning and instruction will impact that mission.

### **Session 1 Video:**

## Session 1: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. After hearing Dan’s introduction to the seven Cs of curriculum and instruction, what areas do you think will be the most helpful to you? What questions or concerns do you have as you enter this course of study?
2. In what ways do you believe your school is achieving its distinctive Christian mission? What areas would you identify for improvement in terms of mission alignment?

## Session 2: Clarity 1: How will we meet the promises of our school's mission?

### Session 2 Objectives:

- Define a “guaranteed and viable” curriculum and why it is important
- Explain how a “guaranteed and viable” curriculum impacts student achievement

### Session 2 Introduction:

How does reflecting on school curriculum impact student success? In this session, Dan explains the importance of a clear, school-wide curriculum and its value to school achievement.

### Session 2 Video:

## Session 2: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. Have you ever struggled with any of these questions? Select one below and discuss.
  - What am I supposed to teach in class this year?
  - What do I eliminate if I run out of time?
  - How does what I am teaching build on and connect to what others are teaching, or interfere with it?
  - How do I ensure that my students are ready for what happens next?
2. Do you have a “guaranteed and viable” curriculum? If not, what would you need to do to get one?
3. What was your experience like as a new teacher? What information might have helped you to better succeed?
4. How does curriculum mapping support you in both the Christian and Clarity aspects of your teaching?

### Recommended Resource:

Chenoweth, Karin. *Schools That Succeed: How Educators Marshal the Power of Systems for Improvement*. Harvard Education Press, 2017.

**CT Connection:** In Curriculum Trak, there are two key reports that collate your school-wide curriculum details for the purposes of identifying your “guaranteed and viable curriculum.”

- **[Scope and Sequence Report](#)** - This report will detail the key concepts covered in each of your subject areas. [Here's another view](#) of the scope and sequence.
- **[Benchmark Reports](#)** - These reports are helpful to see how each unit fits into the standards/benchmarks your school had adopted as a framework for curricular decisions.

## Session 3: Clarity 2: How can we choose content well?

### Session 3 Objectives:

- Develop a process for evaluating instructional content
- Explore the value of state and national standards in the content selection and review process

### Session 3 Introduction:

How do you choose what to teach and what not to teach? What role will textbooks and standards/benchmarks play in the process? Dan provides some guidance and filters for selecting the most relevant content in your instruction and empowering teachers to lead the way in the process.

### Session 3 Video:

## Session 3: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. What is the role of textbooks in your instruction? What are the +/-'s?
2. Why do you need to map if you already have a textbook?
3. How did your school select their standards? What criteria did they use?
4. What systems do you have in place for finding and using high-quality resources in your instruction? How can you share that with colleagues in efficient ways?
5. How might your curriculum maps/unit plans provide some freedom from textbooks and empower you to take charge of the educational experiences in your classroom?

### Recommended Resource:

Schmoker, Michael J. *Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning*. ASCD, 2011.

Friedberg, Solomon, and Sheila Byrd Carmichael. "The State of State Standards Post-Common Core." *The Thomas B. Fordham Institute*, 22 Aug. 2018, [fordhaminstitute.org/national/research/state-state-standards-post-common-core](http://fordhaminstitute.org/national/research/state-state-standards-post-common-core).

**CT Connection:** Curriculum Trak seeks to make standards selection and review easy for any user. For more information check out the [Available Standards Listing](#).

For additional information about preparing or working with standards, click [here](#).

## Session 4: Consistency: How will we deliver a consistent instructional program across the grades?

### Session 4 Objectives:

- Consider how to best create curriculum maps and unit plans in your context
- Understand the thinking behind some recommended practices related to curriculum mapping

### Session 4 Introduction:

What steps should you follow to create your maps? Where do you start and where are you going? In this session, Dan walks through recommended practices for mapping and evaluating your curriculum and explains the significance of each part of the process.

### Session 4 Video:

## Session 4: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. Do you have a curriculum design model at your school? If so, how would you describe it?
2. How did you arrive at a common language to describe your articulated curriculum?
3. Are your units of study aligned K-12? What needs to happen next?
4. What is your assessment philosophy/plan as a school?
5. Are you using current assessment results to understand what your students “caught” about the reason your school exists?

**CT Connection:** Curriculum Trak promotes and encourages both internal and external curriculum review.

- Externally, the Other Curriculum Area within your account will allow you to see how other schools like yours have defined their template. Using the variety of search options and the filters available in each, you are able to sort through thousands of maps and units plans.
- Internally, the [View Content by Template Field](#) allows you to zero in on specific areas of your own maps by grade or subject area.

## Session 5: Collaboration: How do we improve what we are doing for students by working together as a team?

### Session 5 Objectives:

- Describe why collaboration is important to planning and instruction
- Discuss how Curriculum Trak can support collaborative efforts

### Session 5 Introduction:

How can we combat instructional isolation? Is collaboration possible in your context? Dan highlights the need for a collaborative approach to instruction and how Curriculum Trak can support you in those efforts.

### Session 5 Video:

## Session 5: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. What opportunities do you currently have to collaborate with other teachers? What value has come from that? What struggles and barriers do you encounter?
2. Do you have structures, tools and processes that move you through Plan-Do-Reflect-Revise cycles with student results?
3. How might a clearly articulated and up-to-date curriculum in a easily-accessed tool help you to collaborate and meet student needs?
4. What opportunities have you identified to integrate your areas of instruction with other areas at your school? What value has come from that? What struggles and barriers did you encounter in the process?

**CT Connection:** Curriculum Trak promotes both internal and external collaboration for the purposes of integration and swapping best practices.

- Externally, through the **Other Curriculum** area, search by units and filter by a specific keyword to find units focusing on similar topics as yours or one you would like to integrate.
- Internally, the **Search by Keyword Report** will allow you to see exactly where specific topics are covered within your school-wide curriculum.

## Session 6: Constituents: How can we engage students in the learning process?

### Session 6 Objectives:

- Express the value of questions, specifically essential questions, to instruction
- Explore the components of good questioning

### Session 6 Introduction:

What role does questioning play in your instruction? How can you capture the value of questions in your instructional plans? Dan unpacks the role of questioning in planning and even faith learning.

### Session 6 Video:

## Session 6: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. Why did Dan choose to focus on Essential Questions in the Constituents section?
2. How do Essential Questions serve multiple purposes? What are those purposes?
3. How can focusing on learning and instruction at a conceptual level help you teach for life-change?
4. How many Essential Questions should be in a unit? How do they reflect the mission of your school?
5. What process might you use to have teachers continue to refine/develop quality Essential Questions?

### Recommended Resource:

McTighe, Jay, and Grant P. Wiggins. *Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Student Understanding*. ASCD, 2013.

**CT Connection:** Within Curriculum Trak, you can explore essential questions employed by teachers around you through the [View Curriculum by Template Field](#) report (if you are tracking essential questions). This will allow you to explore and compare essential questions across grade levels and in different subject areas. The **Other Curriculum** area will allow you to find other schools like your using essential questions.

## Session 7: Culture of Learning: How do we establish a culture of learning at our school?

### Session 7 Objectives:

- Discuss how a culture of learning can be promoted in your context
- Define how you can grow in your own practices relating to curriculum and instruction

### Session 7 Introduction:

What role do you play in your school's culture of learning? Dan provides some insight into how leadership leads to a life of learning.

### Session 7 Video:

## Session 7: Questions to Ponder and Discuss

1. Are the right structures, tools and processes in place at your school? If not, who is responsible for putting these in place?
2. In what ways do you see Curriculum Trak supporting your efforts to improve instruction at your school and in your area?
3. How do you identify areas for your own professional development and define your own goals for improvement in instruction?
4. How might tying your goals back to your articulated curriculum be helpful?
5. How do you communicate/share these strategies and practices with your colleagues?

**CT Connection:** Curriculum Trak can help promote a culture of learning withing your school in two different ways:

- The variety of curriculum reports (in the Reports area) can provide key insights from several different perspectives. We recommend identifying a specific report to incorporate into every staff meeting and identifying reasons to celebrate (What are we doing well?) and an area to grow (Where can we get better?).
- The [Lesson Planner Feature](#) (and the variety of reports available along with it), provides yet another layer of reflection for teachers as they interact with their unit plans.