

# Facilitation Guide to Prioritizing Standards

This facilitation guide is for use during **Step 5** of the “**explore**” phase of the GELN Learning Map, **Prioritizing and Assessment Standards to Accelerate Learning**.

## Session Title: Prioritizing Standards

**Time:** 4 Hours (1 hour setting the stage for all grade level/content areas and then approximately 3 hours per grade level/content area team). This may have to be done by content area in Elementary Schools with grade level teams working simultaneously. Middle School and High School teams can engage in the work simultaneously, with strategic placing of teachers who may teach in two or more content areas/courses.

### Materials:

Article “[What are Power Standards and Why do we Need Them?](#)” By Angela Peery

[T-REAL Criteria Bookmark](#)

Copies of State Standards:

[Michigan Career and College Readiness Standards](#)

Priority Standard Template:

[Blank Example 1](#)

[Blank Example 2](#)

[Blank Example 3](#)

**Objective:** Prioritize state standards into Need to Know vs. Nice to Know

### Context:

As you begin the work of prioritizing *discuss* with the group the *why* behind engaging in this process. Highlight the need for focusing on high priority standards due to time constraints and the need to go deeper into some aspects of content and skills. Stress prioritization, not elimination and assure teachers that all the standards will be taught, however some will get a deep dive and some will get a light touch. Also relate that the priority standards will be those that will be assessed in common assessments that will be developed/selected by them, the teacher teams.

### Process:

**Step 1:** Organize the teachers into grade level/content area teams. Collect all the necessary materials.

**Step 2:** Engage in dialogue around the purpose of prioritizing standards to set the purpose

**Step 3:** Read the article “What are power standards? And why do we need them?” Debrief by asking participants to relate their most important take-aways.

**Step 4:** Review the T-REAL bookmark. This builds on the information in the article by Angela Peery. Remind the teachers that this is the “criteria” that need be met to ensure a standard is a priority.

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**Step 5:** Share the template you are asking teachers to utilize as they determine the priority standards. This is best done electronically. Allow for modifications as they begin the process. Be sure to have a common place to house the completed templates.

**Step 6:** Pass out the appropriate state standard documents to all individuals. Give them the entire grade level content area set, i.e., all of ELA including reading, writing, speaking and listening, language, etc.

**Step 7:** Give each participant their own copy and a highlighter. Let them know they are to read over the document and select/highlight the 10-12 standards they believe fit the selection criteria T-REAL.

**Step 8:** Give participant **5 minutes** to make these selections...no more. If you give too much time, they begin to overthink and will highlight everything. "If everything is important; then nothing is important." Patrick Lencioni

**Step 9:** After the 5 minutes is up, instruct them to start sharing with one another which each selected. Let them know that at the end of the conversation they should, by consensus, arrive at approximately 12-15 priority standards. At this point, someone usually steps up within the team to guide the conversation and record their decisions.

**Step 10:** Once all the priority standards have been determined, teams need to return to the remaining standards that will support those prioritized and begin to determine where they best fit. Dialogue at this point is rich and contextual. Many teachers leave with a much clearer understanding of their standards, how they are connected and build on one another, and how they are implemented in the classroom.

**Step 11:** Once the work of ensuring horizontal alignment between grade level or same course teams/teachers is complete; it is incumbent upon district/school leadership to review and determine the vertical alignment between grade levels and courses that progress from one to another.

**Step 12:** Priority standards are paced out over the course of the year, semester, or unit of study.

**Step 13:** Documents are made public and communicated to all.

## Sequenced Activities Following Prioritization of Standards

- Curriculum Resources are identified and embedded within the priority standards documents to ensure alignment.
- Prioritized standards get deconstructed or unwrapped to ensure consistent instruction and implementation in both content and rigor.
- Learning goals and success criteria are developed from the deconstructed priority standards and formatively assessed during the learning journey.
- Common assessments are developed to ensure consistent implementation and student mastery of content/skills. These common assessments may be instructionally embedded assessment opportunities that allow students to show what they know and are learning in a variety of authentic and engaging ways.

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### Related Resources:

GELN LM: Prioritizing and Assessment Standards to Accelerate Learning

GELN LM: Transferring the Formative Assessment Process to Virtual Learning Environments

Complete Examples of the Priority Standard Templates

[Example 1](#)

[Example 2](#)