



Summary Handout

Interview with Donna Jakubik—
A District Perspective on the
Value of Prioritizing Standards

GELN Learning Map	Prioritizing and Assessing Standards to Accelerate Student Learning
Title	Interview with Donna Jakubik— <i>A District Perspective on the Value of Prioritizing Standards</i>
Recorded/updated	<i>July 30, 2020</i>
Featuring	Donna Jakubik, Principal Maples Elementary School, Dearborn Public Schools Interviewed by Ellen Vorenkamp, Assessment Consultant, Wayne RESA; MAC Board Member
Learning Map Connection	The explore portion of the Learning Map provides information on the process of prioritizing standards. This 22-minute interview features the story of an elementary school principal who engaged her faculty and staff in this process.
Question #1	Why did you decide to engage your faculty in the process of prioritizing and deconstructing the standards?
Response	Recent teacher turnover created a need for collaborative practices and regular dialogue amongst the staff. Maples Elementary had begun the work of creating grade level PLCs that centered on 4 Essential Questions: What do we expect our students to learn? How will they know if they learned it? How will we respond if they don't learn it? How will we respond if they already know it? In thinking about those questions it became very clear we needed to start to think about and identify the essentials that needed to be taught in every grade level for the four main content areas. Teachers wanted to use prioritizing standards documents that had already been created; however, it was determined it would be better for teams of teachers to go through the process together, to have the dialogue with one another and make their own decisions, while getting a better understanding of the critical skills embedded in the standards and how they are being implemented in their classrooms. Grade level teams were able to do this process in the space of a 3-hour zoom meeting.
Question #2	What do you anticipate the prioritizing and deconstructing process will accomplish in your school for

	your teachers and students?
Response	While the MI Career and College Readiness Standards provide a general overview of what we need our students to know and be able to do, they are just a starting point. We know teachers need to dig deeper to provide that progression of skills from current learning to prior learning to future learning. Donna anticipates having teams of teachers work with prior grade level team members to determine which priority standards were mastered well during the last school year and which standards may need to be scaffold into current year content to ensure all students have an opportunity to attain those pieces of content knowledge and skills. Donna also expects having teachers begin to either develop assessments aligned to the prioritized standards and/or work to align current assessments within their curriculum resources to the priority standards. She feels this will help establish a guaranteed, viable curriculum within her building.
Question #3	How will you ensure the effective implementation of the prioritized and unwrapped standards?
Response	Teacher meet in PLC teams and monitor one another and their students as they share ideas and strategies around the teaching/assessing of the priority standards. Donna also attends meetings when she can, and has a leadership team with at least one teacher from each grade level team that attends those meetings to share success and areas for improvement. Administrators should consider making this work a priority as we enter the upcoming school year to give direction to teachers.
Question #4	What advice might you give other school/district leaders, thinking of engaging in this process with their faculties, as they begin this work?
Response	Start the work as soon as possible. It will be best to have this in place at the beginning of the school year. Perhaps start with the content area you feel may be most problematic and then move into other areas. While it is nice to have an outside facilitator, anyone can organize and facilitate this work from within a school and/or district. Be sure to have protocols in place to simplify the work and help the process flow. The use of the attached facilitation guide may be helpful.
Associated references/resources	Facilitation Guide for Prioritizing Standards, Michigan Assessment Consortium, 2020. Access the Guide here.