Curriculum and Program Reviews

ADL
Meaningful Teaching & Learning

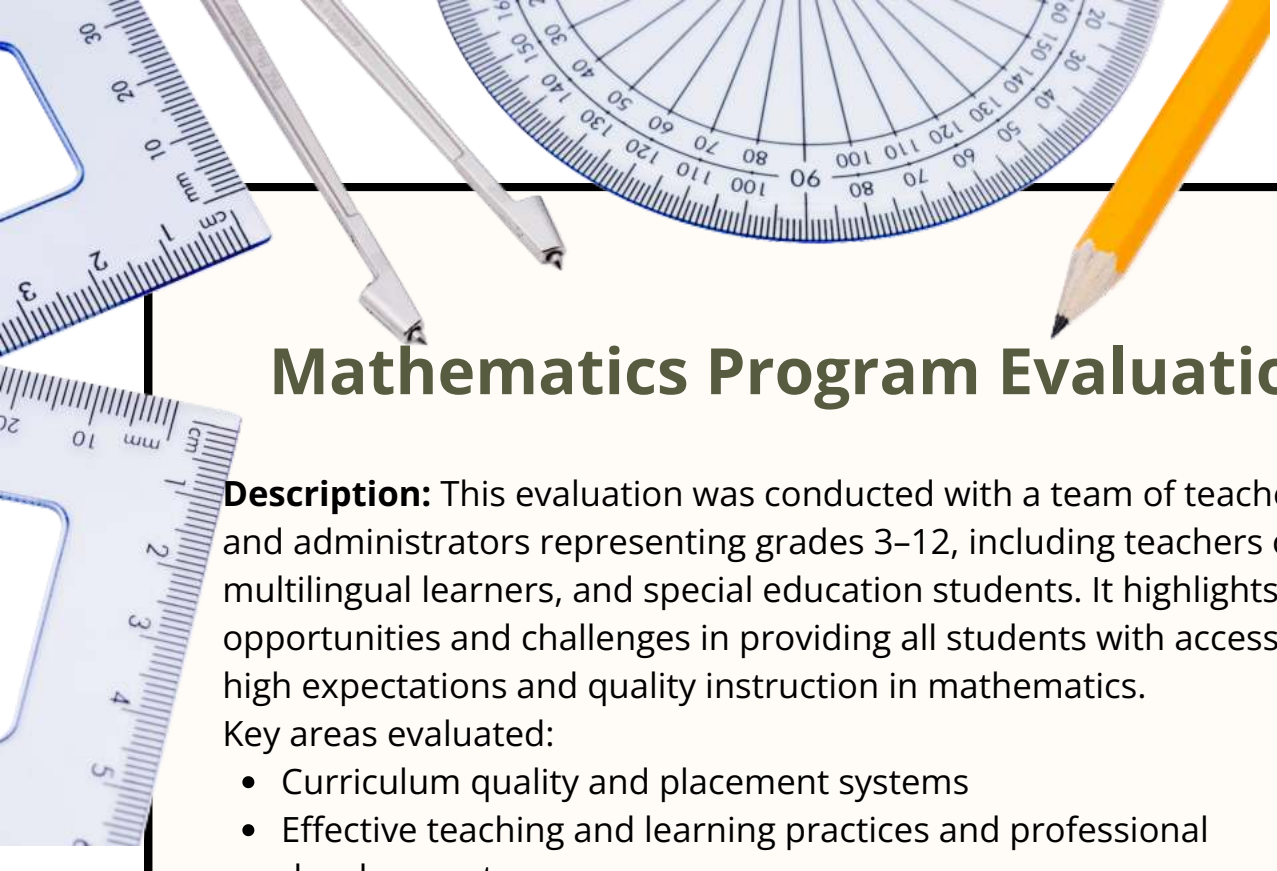
Angela is committed to helping schools and districts achieve educational goals through comprehensive, collaborative curriculum and program reviews. Each evaluation is grounded in research, aligned with educational objectives, and provides actionable strategies to enhance teaching and learning. Discover how Angela's thoughtful analyses and expert recommendations, conducted in partnership with school-based teams, can transform education for students and educators alike.

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Mathematics Program Evaluation

Description: This evaluation was conducted with a team of teachers and administrators representing grades 3–12, including teachers of multilingual learners, and special education students. It highlights the opportunities and challenges in providing all students with access to high expectations and quality instruction in mathematics.
Key areas evaluated:

- Curriculum quality and placement systems
- Effective teaching and learning practices and professional development
- Support structures and student representation in advanced courses

Methodology: Data was collected via surveys, classroom visits, and focus groups from over 2,000 stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Over 100 documents, including curriculum maps, unit planners, and assessments, were reviewed.

Key Findings and Recommendations:

- Curriculum Improvement: The elementary curriculum requires enhancements to foster algebraic thinking and better prepare students for advanced courses.
- Inconsistent Teaching Practices: Research-based methods are not uniformly and reliably implemented across classrooms.
- Equity Gaps in Access: Black and Hispanic students, as well as multilingual learners, are underrepresented in advanced courses.
- Actionable Next Steps: Develop a strategic plan focusing on curriculum revision, professional learning, and enhanced support structures to address challenges at the system level.

Report Excerpt:
Fostering Growth Mindset and Mathematical Identity

Finding: Students' mathematical identities and confidence are closely tied to instructional approaches. Inconsistent practices across grade levels limit opportunities for students to engage deeply with mathematics, especially when productive struggle is not embraced.

Illustration: Observations and focus group discussions highlighted that students thrive when tasks challenge their reasoning and resilience.



One multilingual learner noted: “Last year, I was learning something I already knew, and it wasn’t challenging. This year, I am learning Algebra, and now I feel accomplished and happy.”

Recommendations:

- Engagement in Tasks: Implement tasks with multiple entry points and encourage mathematical reasoning and reflection.
- Support Productive Struggle: Foster environments where productive struggle is normalized as part of the learning process, helping students build resilience and problem-solving skills.
- Reflective Practices: Integrate activities where students analyze and discuss their problem-solving strategies to deepen understanding.



Interested in Evaluation Services?

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Advancing Literacy Evaluation

Description: This example highlights an evaluation of a district's reading program, offering insights and recommendations aligned with the Science of Reading and principles of biliteracy instruction. Angela collaborated with a district team of teachers, reading specialists, coaches, and principals to develop a shared understanding of reading and assess how the current district's reading program addressed key competencies and skills of reading.

Methodology: Data was collected through focus groups, surveys, and collaborative committee discussions involving teachers, administrators, and literacy specialists. Instructional materials, including curriculum maps, reading program resources, and EdReport reviews of widely used curricula, were analyzed alongside professional literature on reading instruction to evaluate program alignment and identify areas for enhancement.

Key Findings and Recommendations:

- Programs and Teaching Practices: District resources exist that support foundational skills in phonics and phonological awareness, but consistency is needed across grade levels.
- Actionable Next Steps: Professional development is needed to deepen understanding of the Science of Reading and biliteracy principles. Additional resources are necessary to enhance vocabulary, phonics, and writing instruction and provide bilingual program support.



Report Excerpt:
Aligning Literacy Practices with Research-Based Principles

Finding: Teachers have varied levels of understanding and abilities to implement the components of reading instruction. While foundational skills like phonological awareness and phonics are emphasized in primary grades, instruction often lacks consistency and alignment with the district's guiding principles for literacy instruction.

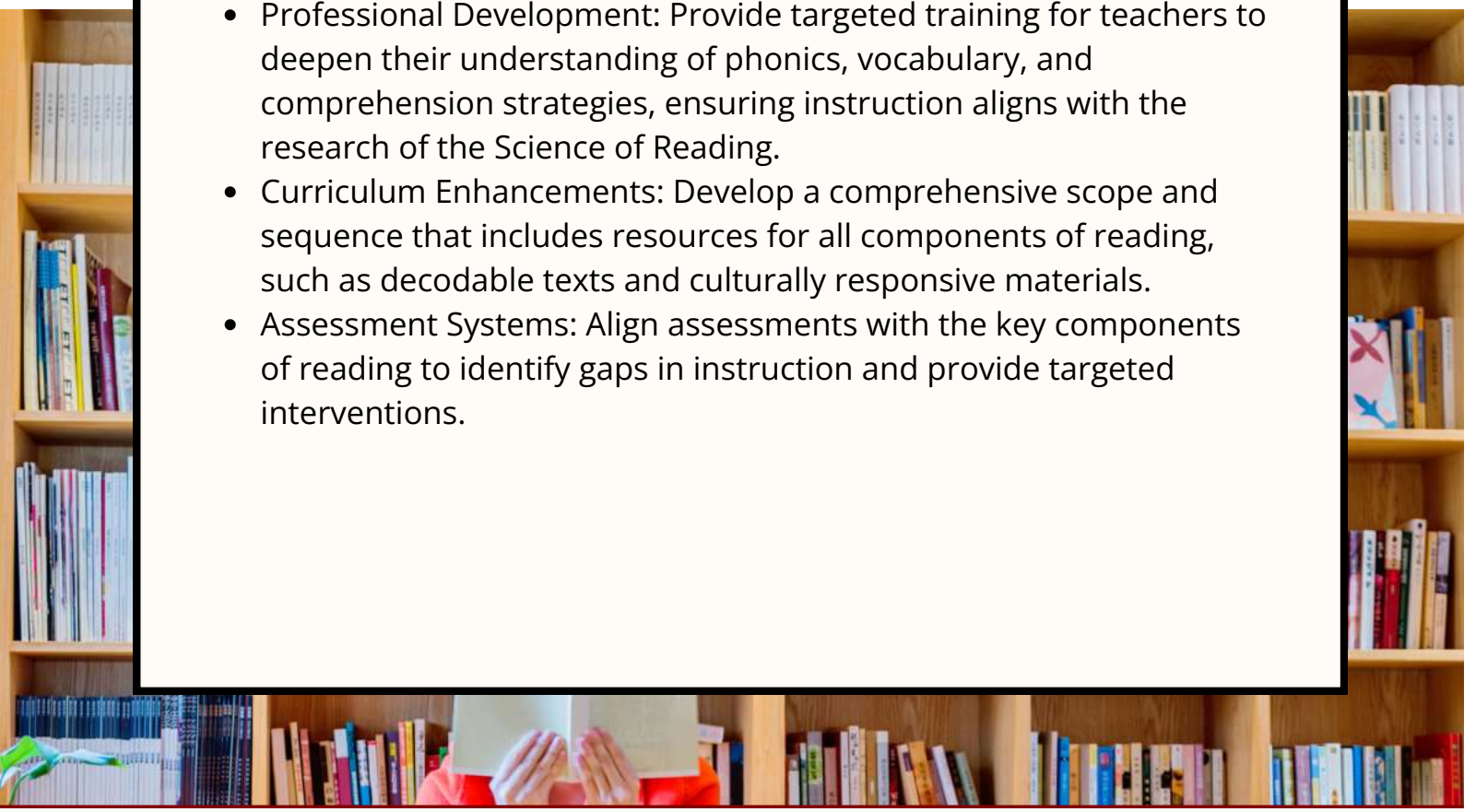
Illustration: Surveys revealed that 67.5% of teachers identified phonics instruction as a current gap in their practice. Focus group discussions highlighted that while current resources support foundational skills, additional resources, and professional development are needed to address vocabulary and comprehension instruction, particularly in grades 3-5.



One teacher noted: “We need a clearer roadmap for how to integrate these tools into a cohesive program that connects reading to writing and builds vocabulary effectively.”

Recommendations:

- Professional Development: Provide targeted training for teachers to deepen their understanding of phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies, ensuring instruction aligns with the research of the Science of Reading.
- Curriculum Enhancements: Develop a comprehensive scope and sequence that includes resources for all components of reading, such as decodable texts and culturally responsive materials.
- Assessment Systems: Align assessments with the key components of reading to identify gaps in instruction and provide targeted interventions.



Report Excerpt:
Strengthening Biliteracy and Bilingual Instruction

Finding: Teachers recognized the need for a comprehensive scope and sequence that integrates resources for both English and Spanish instruction, ensuring students in the dual-language program receive a balanced and equitable experience. Current gaps in vocabulary instruction and alignment with biliteracy principles were identified as areas for improvement.

Illustration: Surveys indicated that while 71.4% of teachers felt prepared to teach phonics and decoding, only 46.4% felt confident teaching oracy, and 65.6% desired more support in teaching linguistic comprehension and transfer skills.



One teacher shared: “We need resources that are appropriate, high-quality, and equitable. Our instruction must be purposeful and connected across languages, classrooms, and grade levels.”

Recommendations:

- Scope and Sequence: Develop a tailored scope and sequence for dual-language instruction, incorporating biliteracy principles and culturally responsive materials.
- Professional Development: Provide training on strategies for teaching vocabulary and fostering transfer between English and Spanish.
- Resources: Expand access to decodable texts, high-interest bilingual materials, and tools to support vocabulary and linguistic comprehension.



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Curriculum Evaluation

Description: This comprehensive review assessed curriculum documents for alignment with the attributes of a high-quality curriculum and offered actionable recommendations for improvement.

Methodology: Data was collected through discussions, surveys, and focus groups involving educators, administrators, curriculum specialists and students. Curriculum materials, including unit templates, instructional guides, and assessments, were analyzed to evaluate alignment with standards and identify opportunities for improvement in curriculum design and instructional practices.

Key Findings and Recommendations :

- Organizing Centers: Units are organized around essential questions, big ideas, and enduring understandings, though further clarity is recommended to strengthen focus.
- Standards Alignment: Alignment to the New York Next Generation Learning Standards is necessary, along with updates to reflect the latest science, social studies, and mathematics practices.
- Assessment Types: While diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are included, performance assessments need development to measure and produce meaningful student learning.
- Instructional Practices: Student learning activities need to be explicitly linked to standards, emphasizing differentiation and active engagement.
- Curriculum Structure: A common curriculum document is necessary for ensuring a consistent format that connects essential questions, assessments, and learning activities making it easier for teachers to use.

Actionable Next Steps:

- Streamline Organizing Centers: Clarify essential questions, big ideas, and learning goals within units.
- Update Standards Alignment: Reflect current educational priorities across all subjects.
- Enhance Performance Assessments: Develop standards-aligned tasks with rubrics.
- Promote Interdisciplinary Units: Combine standards from multiple subjects to create cohesive learning experiences.

Download the full report here



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What types of evaluations do you offer?
A: Angela specializes in program evaluations across all areas. Evaluations align with each district's unique priorities, addressing goals such as curriculum alignment, instructional effectiveness, and equity.

Q: How is the evaluation designed?
A: Angela collaborates with a district team of administrators and teachers to develop guiding questions and a methodology for the evaluation. The team actively participates in data collection and analysis to ensure understanding of the results and position the district to address recommendations.

Q: What types of data are collected?
A: Data collection methods may include surveys, focus groups, classroom observations, and reviews of curriculum maps, assessments, and instructional materials. This comprehensive approach ensures a holistic understanding of the district's strengths and challenges.

Q: How is stakeholder data kept confidential?
A: Angela ensures that all data is anonymized and securely stored, adhering to standards to protect stakeholders' privacy and integrity throughout the evaluation process.

Q: What is included in an evaluation report?
A: Each report includes:

- An executive summary
- A detailed description of the methodology
- Key findings and actionable recommendations
- Supporting data, such as survey results, classroom observation insights, and document reviews

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who are the evaluation reports designed for?
A: Reports provide insights for:

- School boards
- Community members and caregivers
- District administrators and school leaders
- Teachers and students

Q: How long does an evaluation take?
A: Most evaluations are completed within 12 weeks, but the timeline varies based on the scope of the project. Angela works with the district team to ensure the process is thorough yet efficient.

Q: What types of evaluations has Angela conducted before?
A: Angela has conducted evaluations including:

- Assessing curriculum quality using high-quality curriculum attributes
- Aligning curriculum with The Curriculum That Matters Framework
- Developing a diversified and balanced assessment system
- Evaluating mathematics programs for equity and effectiveness
- Aligning literacy programs with Science of Reading principles

Q: Do you offer support for implementing recommendations?
A: Yes. Angela provides ongoing support, including professional development, curriculum design assistance, and follow-up evaluations.



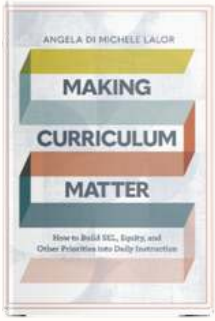
How can we get started?

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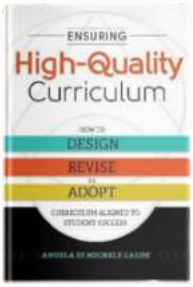


ABOUT ANGELA

Angela Di Michele Lalor is an educational consultant with over 25 years in professional development. She specializes in guiding school districts to design curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices that reflect and advance their educational goals. Angela has presented at ASCD's Annual Conference and the Conference on Educational Leadership. Her work emphasizes curriculum as a transformative tool that can impact student learning. More can be found at adlalorconsulting.com.



In her latest book from ASCD, *Making Curriculum Matter: How to Build SEL, Equity and Other Priorities into Daily Instruction*, Angela provides concrete steps for educators to improve their curriculum and align it with valued outcomes for student learning..



Angela's first book *Ensuring High-Quality Curriculum: How to Design, Revise, or Adopt Curriculum Aligned to Student Success*, provides a comprehensive guide for educators looking to create, revise, or evaluate curriculum.

Articles and Podcasts

- Enhancing Literacy Through Interdisciplinary Learning, NYSASCD Impact On Instructional Improvement (Fall/Winter 2024)
- 3 Ways to Integrate SEL Into the Curriculum, Edutopia (January 12, 2023)
- 4 Reasons to Try Diagnostic Learning Experiences, Edutopia (November 3, 2022)
- How School Leaders Can Support Professional Development, Edutopia (September 22, 2022)
- 5 Elements of a Relevant Curriculum, ASCD Express (July 27, 2022)
- Building Equitable Learning Experience Through the Formative Assessment and Feedback Process, NYSASCD Impact On Instructional Improvement (Summer 2022)
- Feedback that Empowers Students, Edutopia (June 24, 2022)
- Creating a Culture of Learning, Edutopia (October 5, 2021)
- Curriculum Design That Empowers Teachers , After the Bell Podcast