



Instructional Acceleration

NEW MEXICO GUIDANCE



This document is designed to accompany the New Mexico Instructional Scope (NM IS 1.0) which is a comprehensive curriculum guidance tool for supporting educators in leading all K–12 students in accessing the Common Core State Standards Math and English Language Arts (ELA) standards at grade level. **The entire [NM IS 1.0](#) will be launched on July 16, 2020.**

A recent study done by NWEA shows that after the pandemic, students will likely experience learning loss at approximately 30% in ELA and 50% in math. While it is undeniable that students across the state have been supported by teachers, school systems, family members, and community members through school closures and that incredible efforts have been made to address student learning needs, it is nevertheless highly likely that the students of New Mexico will return in the fall of 2020 with missed learning and specific instructional needs.

For this reason, district leaders will need to provide strategic guidance to educators. Instructional choices for teachers will be critical in the design of a high-quality response to COVID-19 closures. This guide, along with the information in the Instructional Scope, was created to outline standards and instructional practices that will be needed to ensure all students in New Mexico receive grade-level work and have access to rigorous and equitable instruction.



New Mexico is exploring a myriad of scenarios for navigating safety and health guidelines during the upcoming school year. Regardless of scenario, however, New Mexico will leverage the New Mexico Instructional Scope in the 2020–2021 school year to address missed learning and instructional gaps through accelerated instruction. **The typical approach of remediation—teaching below grade-level standards—is not an effective approach to catching students up and will likely compound the problem. This approach of “meeting students where they are,” though well intentioned, practically guarantees students will lose more academic ground and reinforces misguided beliefs that some students cannot do grade-level work.** The students stuck in this vicious cycle are disproportionately the most vulnerable: students of color, from low-income families, with special needs, or learning English.

Unlike remediation, acceleration is the idea of taking the most important grade-level standards students need to understand and prioritizing that learning in a strategic way, so all students have access to grade-level instruction. In virtual learning scenarios, district leaders can lean on this guide and the work encompassed in the Instructional Scope to prioritize content and design scaffolded learning opportunities strategically. These types of learning opportunities will ensure that virtual, hybrid, or in-person scenarios are characterized by instructional choices that reinforce the belief that all students deserve access to grade level appropriate content.

In other words, doubling down on typically utilized strategies for catching students up will only widen the opportunity gap or increase/expand needs. Instead, the focus on acceleration will lead to a fundamentally different strategy for diagnosing lost learning and putting every student on a fast track to grade level—a strategy designed to accelerate their exposure to grade-appropriate work, not delay it.



Reentry Support Guidance

Public Education Department

Core Tenets of Acceleration

These tenets are the set of values New Mexico believes should guide instructional decisions for the 2020–2021 school year.

1

Grade-level Content is the Academic Priority

2

Address Inequities Head-on

3

Support and Assume the Best of All Stakeholders

Submit every idea to a simple test: Will this help every student get back to grade level? This does not mean ignoring social/emotional or other non-academic needs; addressing those are core to setting students up for success. More importantly, you should prioritize accelerating students' learning by accelerating their exposure to grade-appropriate content—so that every student can get back to grade level.

Losing so much of this school year has likely exacerbated existing inequities and opportunity gaps in your school. Ensure that all your instructional plans account for the academic and social/emotional supports students will need.

In this pandemic, everyone has done the best they know how to do in an unprecedented situation. Assume the best of your students, families, and fellow staff in the upcoming school year. Ensure that you have a strong plan to provide support for all stakeholders in this uncertain time.

1. **Prioritize the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge** for each subject area and grade level.
2. **Plan your approach to diagnosing students' unfinished learning** in that prerequisite content knowledge and those prerequisite skills.
3. **Adapt your scope and sequence/pacing guidance** for each subject and grade level to reflect where teachers might need to provide acceleration support.
4. **Monitor your students' progress** on grade-appropriate assignments.
5. **Adjust your supports** for teachers and leaders based on student results. Consider how to address specific learning needs and where targeted intervention may be needed.

Recommendations for Accelerating Student Learning

Assess the scenario for learning and proceed through these steps.



Connecting Acceleration to the NM Instructional Scope (NM IS) 1.0

The NM IS supports acceleration by providing detail and clarity around standards, best practices for instruction, and the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for math and literacy. Using the subject-specific pages in this guide in conjunction with the Instructional Scope should provide information on these details for use.

- Standards are defined as the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge are **bolded**, so they stand out amongst the other standards. This does not mean that these are only standards required to be taught, just these are the standards that will allow for the acceleration the students of New Mexico need during this time. **The bolded standards are the priority standards and the others need to be integrated.**
- Information in the Instructional Scope will define all standards and instructional practices to consider when planning grade-level instruction for all students.
- Assessment information is provided to help guide instruction and support monitoring student progress on grade-level assignments.
- Guidance is provided on how to utilize high-quality instructional materials that best support the accelerated approach.



All of these components of the NM IS are meant to provide guidance for educators. This resource, when used in conjunction with high-quality instructional materials, will allow all students to receive an acceleration of grade-level work to ensure rigorous and equitable instruction occurs in all New Mexico classrooms.

Connecting Acceleration to Formative Assessment Practices and Tools

It is important to connect the work of acceleration to assessment performance to ensure that instructional time is maximized to prioritize standards for acceleration. To do this, teachers want to ensure they are utilizing multiple measures rather than a single assessment to gauge status of student knowledge and skills at the start of the school year. Multiple measures of student understanding include formative and interim assessment data, as well as leveraging longitudinal data, screeners, and other informal learning checks. Developing, selecting, and using the information from high-quality assessments works best when teachers can work together in groups such as professional learning communities (PLC). As student progress is monitored, it is important to respond with both the data and acceleration in mind. Here are some steps that could be taken based on formative practices and interim performance.

- **Less than 25% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** respond with targeted intervention for those specific students. Do not adjust whole-group instruction to meet this need.
- **Between 25–75% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** analyze the standard and high-quality instructional material being used to determine.
 - ▶ If the material spirals into future units of instruction, then adjust the scope and sequence/pacing guide to offer embedded formative assessments to regularly monitor progress. Since the material spirals, there is no need to adjust the scope and sequence/pacing guide to add instructional days. This is true for both priority and non-priority standards.
 - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is a priority standard, then slight adjustments should be made to the instructional days in the scope and sequence/pacing guide. These adjustments should be as minimal as possible (one to three days) so as not to remove needed days for other standards. Adjustments should also be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.
- **More than 75% of students perform below mastery on an assessment:** respond with targeted whole-group instruction to meet these needs. Analyze the standard and high-quality instructional material being used to determine
 - ▶ If the material spirals into future units of instruction, then adjust the scope and sequence/pacing guide to offer embedded formative assessments to regularly monitor progress. Since the material spirals, there is no need to adjust the scope and sequence/pacing guide to add instructional days. This is true for both priority and non-priority standards.
 - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is a priority standard, then slight adjustments should be made to the instructional days in the scope and sequence/pacing guide. These adjustments should be as minimal as possible (two to three days) so as not to remove needed days for other standards. Adjustments should also be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.
 - ▶ If the material does not spiral and it is not a priority standard, then a small (one day) adjustment could be made to the instructional days in the scope and sequence/pacing guide. This should only be done if all students share a common misconception that could be addressed easily in one lesson. If this is not the case, adjustments should be made to incorporate small opportunities for spiraling of content in practice found daily lessons or homework.

For more in-depth information on this topic, please read [Using Multiple Measures and Formative Practice to Identify Learning Needs](#).