

CSCOPE Teacher and Parent Q & A

1) What is CSCOPE?

CSCOPE is a comprehensive, customizable, user friendly curriculum management system built on the most current research-based practices in the field. Its primary focus is to impact instructional practices in the classroom to improve student performance.

This multi-faceted system includes three key components that operate seamlessly:

- Professional Development
- Curriculum & Assessment
- Innovative Technology

2) What is curriculum?

Curriculum is what we teach, when we should teach it and why.

The “**what**” is the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). In CSCOPE it is the Vertical Alignment Documents and Instructional Focus Documents.

The “**when**” is the effective sequencing of instruction. In CSCOPE it is the Year at a Glance Document and Instructional Focus Document

The “**why**” is the performance standard.

3) What is instruction?

Instruction is the “**how**” portion of teaching. Teachers have the flexibility, freedom and control of how they present knowledge and information to their students. The “**what**”, “**when**” and “**why**” is non-negotiable, but the “**how**” is negotiable as long as the students are successful with the performance indicator.

4) How much Flexibility do teachers have with CSCOPE?

CSCOPE is not a textbook, but should be supplemented just like we would do with a textbook. The CSCOPE documents (YAG, VAD, TEKS verification Matrix and IFD's) identify what must be taught and when. This is the “**what**” and “**why**” portion of CSCOPE that is non-negotiable and must be followed. The CSCOPE lessons are examples of the depth and rigor necessary to improve students' math and science skills from one grade level to the next. Teachers have the opportunity to bring in other materials, resources and activities that have proven to be successful in the past as long as they fit into the alignment of the CSCOPE documents. These activities must meet or exceed the performance indicator **identified in the Instructional Focus Documents**.

5) What is the 5E model of instruction?

The CSCOPE lessons are based on the 5E model of instruction. 5E stands for: Engage, Explore, Explain, Extend/Elaborate, Evaluate. This is not a new concept, it is just a good teaching practice. Because 5E is a student centered approach to instruction, it is critical that classroom procedures and routines along with expectations for behavior are clearly identified and established by the teacher. Once these expectations are established, students will be ready for any type of instructional approach.

5E utilizes a lot of hands on activities designed to promote students' critical thinking and problem solving skills. When students are engaged and challenged in the classroom, their opportunity for misbehavior is greatly diminished. This results in fewer student referrals to the office.

6) What about homework with CSCOPE?

CSCOPE identifies the K-12 alignment and provides sample lessons for teachers to use. Since it does not provide the volume of resources familiar with textbook publishers, teachers will have to ensure that students and parents are provided with resources and instructions for any type of work to be completed at home.

Homework or independent practice is assigned based on individual students' performance in guided practice and should reinforce the learning at the instructional level. As you know, assigning independent practice at a frustrational level is counterproductive and actually can inhibit student learning. Likewise assigning homework that the student can already do (even prior to instruction) is seen as busy work and contributes nothing to the learning. CSCOPE affords teachers the opportunity to design independent practice based on individual students' needs. Teachers are in the best position to make appropriate assignments based on student strengths and weaknesses and are encouraged to do so.

7) Is CSCOPE proven?

Ervin Knezek, statewide CSCOPE coordinator, told the school board on September 24th that schools who have **successfully** implemented CSCOPE have seen an increase in their campus ratings. Schools that have partially implemented CSCOPE have been able to maintain their campus ratings.

8) Which Regional Service Centers are supporting CSCOPE?

Region 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 19, 20.

9) How many schools are using CSCOPE?

There are 60 school districts in the Region 13 ESC area, and 30 are implementing CSCOPE. Across the state, there are 262 districts and 1218 campuses using CSCOPE. This is approximately 25% of the state.

10) We are doing math and science this year. What about social studies and ELA?

The administrative team has discussed this and agrees that we should give math and science two full years at the elementary level before we proceed to implement another subject area. In departmentalized grade levels, SS will be implemented in 2008-2009 with full implementation district wide in 2009-2010. ELA will be considered for full implementation district wide in 2009-2010.

11) What is the research base behind CSCOPE?

Curriculum Design, Standards, Instructional Design

- Robert Marzano
- Fenwick English
- Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe
- Heidi Hayes Jacobs
- John Crain
- James Barufaldi
- H. Lynn Erickson

Learning Theory

- Reuven Feurstein
- Lev Vygotsky

Professional Development

- Thomas Guskey
- Linda Hammon

12) Do the CSCOPE units build in review of the previous year?

It is by design that CSCOPE builds rather than separating review of prior year's content at the beginning of the school year. The approach is one of a spiraled curriculum. As such, we purposefully use on-grade level content to address the issue of building competency in the TEKS. Naturally, you may find students who would benefit from additional review and may have to supplement the lessons with additional time for specific interventions that will support their learning.

13) What does it mean when CSCOPE calls the lessons “exemplars”?

CSCOPE provides exemplar lessons to demonstrate the depth, breadth, and rigor of the clusters of specified student expectations taught in this unit. They are intended to be used as any other high quality teaching resource. Teachers can add to these lessons with other materials to allow students to achieve the standards clustered together in the instructional focus document. These exemplars contain the elements of learning to ensure that students have access to the rigor and content of the Instructional Focus Documents; however, they can and should be supplemented with other available resources.

14) How much flexibility do teachers have with the lessons?

The lessons are intended to be exemplars; it will be a district decision to determine the flexibility of implementation. If changes to the lessons are made, it is critical that the modifications are created to ensure student success on the performance indicators.

15) How can we best use CSCOPE lessons for students who are not on grade level?

As much as possible, students will need to be taught on grade level because of the changing nature of the assessments. However, you can look at the vertical alignment documents ... determine the specificity for the grade level, then go back to the grade level of the student performance and look at the specificity there to determine how best to scaffold that student's learning. A teacher can also access all grade levels within CSCOPE to investigate activities that might best fit the student's needs.

16) Why might it appear that the order of CSCOPE Algebra I is different from what teachers are used to seeing in textbooks?

While most traditional algebra courses take an algorithmic approach to algebra and solve equations earlier in the school year, CSCOPE takes a functional approach. Therefore the writers chose to develop the idea of relationships between variables in a real world situation before teaching how to solve equations. This approach is reflected in TEXTEAMS Algebra 2000 and Beyond, Mathematics TEKS Connection Grades 9-12, as well as many current textbook series. Students will officially solve equations in Algebra I in Unit 5 which is at the beginning of the 3rd six weeks. In 7th grade students are introduced to solving equations and 8th grade builds on that knowledge. So students have been exposed to solving equations in middle school and will get to it in Algebra I very soon.

17) How will the implementation of the new curriculum be monitored?

The administrative staff consisting of principals, assistant principals, program coordinators, and central office personnel will work with vertical alignment teams, grade levels/departments, as well as individual teachers to assist with the successful implementation of CSCOPE. Formal and informal walkthroughs and observations will be conducted by the entire administrative team.

18) How much is LISD spending on the curriculum alignment effort?

In order to stay current with the demands of state accountability, LISD must consider curriculum alignment activities as an ongoing expense. Teachers will be supported by budgets that allow them to purchase the necessary materials and supplies needed for successful implementation of the curriculum. The ESC contract for CSCOPE during the 2008-2009 school year was approximately \$18,000. This is approximately \$9.00 per student. In addition to the contract, LISD budgeted \$25,000 for materials and supplies for 2008-2009. LISD is committed to supporting the efforts of our teachers in the classroom. Keep in mind that there is also a price for LISD if we don't align curriculum.

19) The CSCOPE lessons utilize a lot of manipulatives for hands on activities. Will students be able to use these manipulatives on the state assessment test?

No. The Texas Education Agency does not allow the use of manipulatives on the state assessment tests.