



Annual plans are organizational tools that effective teachers use to group and sequence content/skills into instructional units, prioritize content/skills that are required for success in current and future courses, and include options for enrichment and remediation as needed. They are an important component of student success because they not only set the trajectory for the current school year, but they also bridge the gap between any previous and future courses. When creating annual plans, teachers should take into account what needs to be taught and in what order for efficient use of class time and optimal scaffolding. The scaffolding of knowledge and skills helps students move from rote knowledge to depth of understanding (Childre, Sands & Pope, 2009). Annual plans help teachers strategically think through instructional decisions and lead to greater student achievement. Fortunately, HISD provides many resources that lay out a framework for the essential components of an annual plan to support teachers through the process.

How do I know which skills and concepts are important to my students' success?

Step 1: Prep Work

- Review the checklist at the end of the document to provide direction for developing the annual plan.
- Revisit how to Begin with the End for guidance on how to approach planning at all levels.
- Review the Annual Goal and the end of year assessment or performance task.
- For classes that have HISD Curriculum Resources available for the appropriate level and content, the curriculum documents should be used primarily as the annual plan.

Step 2: Draft Plan

- Use the Vertical Alignment Matrix provided by the district or create a similar document to note the content/skills that should have been covered prior to the course and identify content/skills students must master to move forward in future courses.
 - Reflect on what general content and skills students of this age and level should have acquired.
 - Utilize diagnostic measures to give a snapshot of students' prior knowledge and skills.
 - Consider what lasting impression the students should have upon the completion of the current course, which should be reflected in the goals set for the course.
- Employ the Scope and Sequence provided by HISD or create a similar document to separate the year into grading cycles and then break the grading cycles into units.
 - Separate the skills and content deemed important to the course into logical units.
 - Count how many instructional days are available, and assign a set number of days to cover each unit based on the level of rigor and the quantity of material to be covered.
 - Be sure to leave time for re-teaching when considering how many days to devote to each unit.
- Make use of the HISD Pacing Calendars or create a similar document to tentatively schedule units.
 - Download or print a calendar for the months of the school year.
 - Mark off any holidays or school specific events that would interfere with instructional time.
 - Using guidance from the district-provided or self-made Scope and Sequence, assign specific blocks of time on the calendar for each unit.
- Tailor the district resources to meet the specific needs of students.
 - The district-provided Pacing Calendars only account for 80% of instructional time. If there are any prerequisite skills or concepts that students either did not master previously or struggled to retain and apply, the teacher should reserve time in his/her annual plan to revisit this content. Plan ahead of time for enrichment opportunities and forms of interventions for when students struggle (tutorials, small group instruction during workstations, etc.). Take into account modifications for English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented, and Special Education students.

Step 3: Evaluate the Plan

- Ensure that the components of the checklist are used when developing annual the plan.
- Revisit the plan weekly to see if any adjustments need to be made based on interruptions to instructional time or the need for enrichment/remediation.

Checklist

- I have reviewed HISDs Vertical Alignment Matrix, Scope and Sequence, and Pacing Calendar. If I did not have HISD created curriculum, I followed the proposed steps.
- I have made modifications to the annual plan based on student needs.



TIPS

- Consider sharing the curriculum standards with students so that they are aware of how they will be assessed and they can hold themselves accountable for the required skills and content.
- Prepare to spend the bulk of time creating and tailoring an annual plan at the beginning of the year.
- Collaborate with colleagues to create the annual plan and revisit it in PLC's. A plan created with a team or partner is often more manageable and impactful for students.



BURNING QUESTIONS

What if my students are not “typical” HISD students?

The district resources were intended to provide guidance and tools. Teachers should personalize the resources provided by the district to create their own annual plan by adjusting the documents based on students’ levels, needs, and interests, as well as their own teaching style.

What do I do if there is a disruption in the timeline?

Interruptions to instructional time are a reality of teaching. An annual plan is a living document that may need to be adjusted throughout the year in response to changes in and outside of the teacher’s control.

How do I find the time to plan?

Investing time in planning will pay off in maximizing time during instruction and a greater impact on student achievement. Plan time to create and revisit the annual plan by creating a personal routine or by setting reminders (on a paper calendar, on a phone, or in Outlook).