



# Investigating History



## Setting the Stage for Success

Adoption and Implementation Guide

Adopting and implementing new, comprehensive, inquiry-based curricular materials like Investigating History requires an intentional, long-term commitment and may represent a dramatic shift from existing history/social science instructional practice. It is important to remember that the implementation process is just that—a process—and will require the sustained investment and effort of a variety of stakeholders across multiple school years.

Schools and districts who choose to implement Investigating History will have to answer a number of questions early in the process, such as:

- Along what timeline will we implement Investigating History at each grade level?
- Who should be involved in the implementation process and in what ways?
- What is the model and nature of the professional learning that educators will receive, and with which certified professional development provider will we partner?
- What systemic or structural changes (e.g. schedule shifts or adjustments to the instructional coaching model) may be needed to support implementation?

This guide is designed to help schools and districts make more informed and thoughtful choices about these and other questions, as well as to support their ongoing planning and implementation work by highlighting areas where they may need to invest additional time, resources, and/or attention. It draws on the experiences of schools who piloted Investigating History to lay out the conditions that are critical to Investigating History's long-term success and provide a tool that schools and districts can use to determine the extent to which each condition currently exists.

## Conditions for Success

In general, Investigating History's success depends on the extent to which educators have (or are supported in developing) content and pedagogical knowledge and are able to work within structures and a climate that support Investigating History's instructional approach.



**Educators' content**, pedagogical, and pedagogical content knowledge includes knowledge of the content, practice, and literacy standards in the History/Social Science Framework; facility with instructional strategies to support practices such as student discourse, historical inquiry, and literacy development; and alignment with the vision and beliefs at the heart of Investigating History.



**Supportive structures** refer to those existing school- and district-wide structures which reinforce educators' ability to adopt Investigating History such as a well-defined instructional vision or appropriate time for professional development, planning, and collaboration. A supportive climate is one in which educators are able to make Investigating History a main priority and in which students and educators alike are accustomed to inquiry-based, student-centered, culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching across every subject area.

The extent to which these conditions exist—as measured by the Self-Assessment—can help schools and districts determine which implementation timeline and model, as described below, will best leverage existing strengths and allow them to devote sufficient attention to building up those conditions which may not yet exist.

## Implementation Timelines and Models

When implementing Investigating History, schools and districts can choose between a “short track” or “long track” implementation timeline as they roll out the curriculum:

		“SHORT TRACK”	“LONG TRACK”		
		Implement the <u>entire yearlong curriculum</u> across all <u>grade levels</u> in a <b>single school year</b> .	Use only some <u>units</u> and/or use Investigating History in only some <u>classrooms</u> in the initial school year, working towards implementing the entire grade-level curriculum across all classrooms <b>across multiple years</b> . For example...		
Year 1	Year 1	Fully implement the curriculum at all grade levels	Use one or two units across all classrooms at each grade level	Fully implement the curriculum at one grade level	A small number of “early adopter” teachers implement the curriculum
	Year 2	Continue using the curriculum at all grade levels	Fully implement all units of the curriculum at all grade levels	Fully implement the curriculum at additional grade levels	Early adopters support their grade-level colleagues in implementing the curriculum

**It is important to note that ultimately, the goal should be using the full Investigating History curriculum across all classrooms in one or more grade levels.** Investigating History is intentionally structured to develop students’ knowledge, understanding, and skills over the course of the year, and is designed to be used as a core curriculum for all students, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners.

### Pause for Equity

It is important to consider the possible inequities that could result from whichever implementation timeline and model you choose.

**Long-track implementation** has the potential to lead to incoherent and inequitable experiences for students, particularly if the rollout model reinforces existing inequities (e.g. early adopter teachers do not include any classrooms serving multilingual learners). **Short-track implementation** might result in a timeline that misses opportunities for stakeholder input into the adoption process, or one that does not provide sufficient professional development and/or planning time for teachers to use the materials successfully.

Anticipating these potential effects can help you intentionally work to mitigate them as you develop the specifics of your implementation plan. As you go, consider: *What are the impacts of my choices on students, particularly those who are historically underserved? On educators? On families and community members?*



## SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES AND CLIMATE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree



The school or district has an **existing, well-defined, and widely understood instructional vision** (in general and/or for history/social studies more specifically) that aligns with the Investigating History vision described above.



The **current classroom and school climate** provides opportunities for students to be co-constructors of knowledge in the classroom and to take ownership of their learning; that is, students are used to seeing themselves as active and empowered participants in their classroom and school experiences.



There are **other school- or district-wide initiatives that resonate with Investigating History's instructional principles** (e.g., a schoolwide focus on discourse strategies, ongoing professional development focused on culturally and linguistically sustaining instruction, or the use of an inquiry-based curriculum in other content areas).



The educators adopting Investigating History have **prior experience adopting and using a standards-based, comprehensive, core curriculum** and thus have tools and strategies that they can use to internalize and skillfully teach a lesson that they may not have written themselves.



The school or district has **structures for regular collaboration and coaching** that can provide educators with the opportunities to get regular feedback on and support with their use of the Investigating History materials.



The school or district has the **financial resources and/or internal capacity to provide educators with professional development**, either through a partnership with a certified PD provider or by leveraging district educators with experience using Investigating History.



There is **sufficient professional development and planning time in the schedule**—at least a full day to launch each Investigating History unit before it is taught and opportunities for ongoing, continued learning and problem-solving throughout the unit.



Educators adopting Investigating History will be able to **make this change a top priority**, rather than being involved in other significant change initiatives that might compete for their attention and capacity, or might be at odds with the shifts that Investigating History requires (e.g. implementation of new materials for other content areas, prior time-intensive professional development commitments, etc.).

## Interpreting Your Answers

Answers closer to the **“strongly agree”** side reflect strengths or assets that can serve as a foundation for a successful implementation of Investigating History. Answers closer to the **“strongly disagree”** side reflect areas that may need additional focus and/or reinforcement before or during the implementation process.

**More agreement with these statements** suggests that many of the conditions necessary for Investigating History’s success already exist in your school or district and thus that you may be well-prepared for a short-track model. Noticing the patterns of agreement and disagreement can help shape your school or district’s implementation strategy by highlighting assets to draw on as well as areas that may need particular attention.

**More disagreement with these statements** suggests that Investigating History may require additional capacity building or may represent a more significant shift from existing practice; in this case, a long-track model may be more successful. Noticing patterns in your answers can help you determine which long-track approach may be most appropriate. For example:

- In the case of more disagreement with statements about **educator content and pedagogical knowledge**, adopting a smaller number of units at each grade level in Year 1 can be an effective way of providing educators at each grade level with the time to develop this knowledge gradually.
- In the case of more disagreement with statements about **supportive structures and culture**, adopting one grade level at a time may be more conducive to making the structural and cultural shifts necessary by focusing these shifts initially on a smaller cohort of teachers and students (i.e., a single grade level only), and then using them as a foundation for continued growth in future years.

## Next Steps: Supporting Ongoing Implementation

Once you have determined an implementation model, engage stakeholders in the process of setting implementation goals and determining how you will monitor them. Goals might include, for example:

- All teachers are familiar with the structure of the lessons, clusters, and units as reported in professional development sessions.
- All teachers report regularly using and understanding the purpose of the main instructional routines in the curriculum.
- Students’ voice and thinking is consistently at the center of lessons as measured by instructional walkthroughs.

It is also important to think about how you will introduce Investigating History to educators, and to families and community members, from the very beginning of implementation.

A valuable tool through the implementation process is **DESE’s IMplement MA Guide**, particularly **the Launch and Implement and Monitor sections**. We encourage you to refer to the process laid out in this guide to help ensure that your ongoing implementation of Investigating History is collaborative, well-supported, and aligned to your school or district’s instructional vision.