The "Safety Net" Curriculum

What is a Safety Net Curriculum?
The Safety Net is a very limited set of learning objectives organized for each grade and for each subject. It is not the total curriculum-just the "safety net" that every teacher should ensure students know and master. But every teacher should ensure that every student understands the items inside of the Safety Net. The simple truth is this: Few teachers ever cover the entire textbook or the entire curriculum. Often, the decisions about what to cover is based on sequence in which we cover the items that are listed early in the curriculum document or textbook, and so we do not cover the items that are listed late in those documents. The Safety Net offers a better alternative: Students learning what is most important. The focus of the Safety Net is on learning, not on mere coverage. The Safety Net allows every student in the district an opportunity for learning what is most essential.

What is the Purpose of the Safety Net Curriculum?
The purpose of the Safety Net is to empower teachers to make wise decisions about what is most important in the curriculum. The Safety Net is not a device to ignore everything else in the curriculum, but rather a mechanism to help teachers separate the critical elements of a curriculum from learning objectives that are less important.

Three questions guide the selection of Safety Net Learning Objectives:
1. What endures? What skills and knowledge will students gain that last from one academic year to the next?
2. What is essential for progress to the next level of instruction?
3. What contributes to understanding of other standards?

Who:
- Safety Net Curriculum is meant for teachers and instructional leaders.
- 2 teacher representatives from each grade level (K – 12) for each subject (reading, writing, math, science and/or social studies).
- Districts that already have a curriculum document may be interested in this process.
- Client-booked trainings are full at 30.

When:
- This training is completed in one day per subject
- Schedule is 8:00am to 4:00pm.

Where:
- District-sponsored trainings will take place at the district or campus sites.
- A room with enough wall space to post 15 flip charts. A computer lab with printer.

Must Haves for all trainings:
- Audio/Visual: Post-It style flipchart pads with easel,
- Selection of colored markers,
- LCD projector system with large screen with mic.
- 1set of state standards by grade level per subject.
- Computer lab with at least 5-10 computers networked to printer and paper for printer. If there is no computer lab, it is the responsibility of the school to make arrangements to have at least 5 computers for the training or a designated school staff member can type needed information.
- Overview of most current state scores for subjects of focus or the district summary report of the areas of focus.
- 2 teacher representatives from each grade level (K – 12).

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- Room set-up should be "Modified Chevron" with no participants' back positioned toward the presenter. Table and chairs, no student desk.
- Refreshments should be available to participants throughout the day. Meals may be coordinated or left up to participants individually – this is the client's choice.

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