



Atlas

by **faria**
Education Group

Getting Prepped: Curriculum Management

A back-to-school readiness guide for
curriculum leaders and instructional teams

faria.org



The Before-Term Problem

Whether your school year starts in August, September or January, the readiness window is the same: the weeks before the start of the academic term, when the work either gets done in advance or piles up into the first days back. And the pressure is not getting lighter. Schools are adding sections, absorbing staff turnover, and being asked to demonstrate alignment for accreditation, all at once. A curriculum that is housed in disconnected documents cannot keep up with that.

source: RAND's 2026
State of the
American Teacher
survey

18%

of teachers intended to
leave their jobs — close to
one in five.

~57%

still reported burnout,
keeping churn a standing
feature of school life.

Staff turnover is a big part of why. In [RAND's 2026 State of the American Teacher survey](#), 18% of teachers said they intended to leave their jobs — close to one in five — even as reported burnout stayed high at around 57%. Whether or not every one of them follows through, that scale of churn is a standing feature of school life, not a one-off. And each departure takes hard-won knowledge of what is taught, when, and why with it. When that knowledge lives only in people's heads or scattered files, every exit is a gap the next teacher has to fill from scratch.

The schools that start the year on solid ground are the ones that treat curriculum review as an ongoing rhythm rather than a pre-term scramble.



What "Ready" Actually Looks Like

A “ready” curriculum does not mean every unit is perfect. It means the curriculum is prepared, visible, and shared.

- It looks like a structured map that new staff can actually read, so a teacher walking into an unfamiliar course can see the year laid out rather than guessing.
- It looks like standards alignment targeted rather than assumed, gaps and overlaps surfaced and owned before teaching starts.
- It looks like a review cycle scheduled for the year ahead so the work never again piles up into a few panicked weeks.

Open Door Christian Schools in Ohio describes the moment that makes the value land for teachers: seeing their whole year on a single screen. As Director of Teaching and Learning Emily Hawks put it, the first goal was simply to update unit names and timelines so that:

Teachers get to see on one screen, ‘This is your year.’

That clarity is what a ready curriculum offers, to teachers and leaders alike. It is achievable, but only if the curriculum is built to be maintained rather than rebuilt each year.

The Back-to-School Curriculum Readiness Checklist

Work through this before term starts as a guide for your review; a way to pressure-test where your curriculum is ready and where it still needs attention.

Units and Content

- ☐ Unit titles and pacing reviewed and updated for the year
- ☐ Content, skills and essential questions current and meaningful
- ☐ Units reflect what is actually taught, not what was taught years ago
- ☐ Teachers can see their full year at a glance

People

- ☐ New staff given access and orientation to the platform
- ☐ A shared template and clear expectations for each unit section
- ☐ Documentation guidance built in so teachers know what belongs where
- ☐ An internal owner identified to support and spot-check

Alignment

- ☐ Standards aligned across units and courses
- ☐ Gaps and redundancies mapped and owned
- ☐ Vertical and horizontal alignment reviewed

The Year Ahead

- ☐ A review cycle scheduled rather than left to next year
- ☐ Accreditation or evaluation timelines mapped against the review plan
- ☐ Dedicated work time protected in the calendar

☆ A Tip From the Field

One of our customers learned that the way to make curriculum review sustainable is to stop trying to do it all at once. Rather than asking teachers to update every part of every unit in one go, the school's Director of Teaching and Learning built a multi-year plan: **"I just broke it down, like two things per year."** The lesson for a strong start is to define a realistic, phased scope before term, so the work becomes a manageable rhythm rather than an overwhelming push. A curriculum review you can actually sustain beats a perfect one you abandon by October.

Where It Tends to Go Wrong

Curriculum work rarely fails through lack of effort. It fails through structure, or the absence of it.

Curriculum In Disconnected Documents

When maps are scattered across drives and templates, no one has a single source of truth. One of our customers found (prior to implementing Atlas) that by the time accreditation came around, the maps had not been meaningfully updated in a while, and the team's reaction, in their words, was "almost like a panic."

Review Happens too Rarely

Treated as a once-a-year event, curriculum review is easily deferred and often quietly dropped.

Alignment Is Assumed, Not Checked

Schools often believe their curriculum is coherent until they look closely. Reviewing vertical and horizontal alignment intentionally is what turns assumption into evidence, and it is far easier with the whole curriculum visible in one place.

Institutional Knowledge Walks Out the Door.

When experienced staff leave and, as the turnover figures show, many do every year, undocumented curriculum leaves with them, and new teachers start from nothing. A lot of our school partners report the same concern: that new teachers should not have to walk into a course wondering what they are supposed to teach. Good documentation is what protects a school from its own turnover.

The common thread is structure decided in advance. None of these problems is solved by working harder once term begins; they're solved by a curriculum that's built to be maintained from the start.

How Atlas Makes It Easier

Atlas exists to turn curriculum from numerous documents living in folders into a living, shared system, and the start of the year is where that pays off.

Atlas

It gives every teacher and leader a central, visible map, so the curriculum is one source of truth rather than scattered files. New staff can see the year laid out and build on what came before instead of reinventing it. Standards alignment, gaps and overlaps become visible and checkable, and the unit template can carry guidance and expectations directly, so teachers know what belongs in each section without being told individually. One of our school partners reports giving teachers what they call a “north star” they could follow at their own pace.

Crucially, Atlas supports the phased, sustainable approach that makes curriculum review actually happen. A school can set a realistic yearly focus, work to it, and see progress accumulate year over year rather than scrambling before each accreditation cycle. That visibility serves leaders too. At Trinity Christian Academy in Florida, principals used Atlas analytics to see across the whole curriculum, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Carley Ellison found that “seeing the alignment across grade levels helped us better understand where to focus our energy as instructional leaders.”

Done well, the work changes character. It stops feeling like compliance and starts, as one school partner came to see it, like “honoring the craft of what we’re doing as educators.” That is the real payoff: not a finished curriculum, but a living one the whole school can build on.

Already using Atlas?

The new academic year is the time to make sure it is working as a living system rather than an electronic filing cabinet. Three things worth checking before term:

1. Your unit template carries clear guidance and due dates so teachers know what to complete and when.
2. You have a [phased review plan](#) scheduled rather than a once-a-year push, and that your leaders are using the analytics to check alignment coverage rather than assuming them.
3. Consider connecting Atlas with the rest of your ecosystem, feeding your planned curriculum directly into teaching and assessment, so the map and the classroom stay in step.

Back to school is the right time to review last year's curriculum and make sure there are no gaps before term begins.

Ready for a Stronger Start to the Year?

The best time to get your curriculum mapped, aligned and visible is before term begins. If you would like to see how Atlas could help your team turn curriculum review from a scramble into a sustainable rhythm, we would be glad to show you.

Talk to a Solutions Consultant and we will walk you through how Atlas works for a school like yours.

Schedule your demo of Atlas today.

[Schedule a Demo](#)

-  OpenApply
-  ManageBac+
-  Atlas
-  SchoolsBuddy
-  Vectare