

Policy – 2131

Instruction

Curriculum Development

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

The Board recognizes the need for and value of a systematic, ongoing program of curriculum development and evaluation. The design and implementation of the curriculum will be consistent with the board's adopted mission and applicable goals, state laws, and State Board of Education rules. The Board deems it essential that the school system continually develops and modifies its curriculum to provide a common direction of action for all instruction and programmatic efforts in the district and to meet changing needs. This curriculum component will be an integral part of the district long-range planning process. An environment to support curriculum delivery must be created and maintained by all functions of the organization.

While instructional differentiation is expected to occur to address the unique needs of specific students, that instruction shall be derived from a set of curriculum learning common to all students. There will be equitable access to the curriculum for all students.

CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of education is primarily imparting basic knowledge, concepts, processes, and attitudes necessary for the student to successfully function in society. Education recognizes the characteristics unique to each individual and provides a process for development and expression of each student's innate potential and talents.

The curriculum will be designed and implemented using a competency-based curriculum approach that has the following premises:

1. All students are capable of achieving excellence in learning the essentials of formal schooling.
2. Success influences self-concept; self-concept influences learning and behavior.
3. The instructional process can be adapted to improve learning.
4. Schools can maximize the learning conditions for all students through clearly stated expectations of what students will learn, high expectations for all students, short- and long-term assessment of student achievement, and modifications based on assessment results.
5. Successful student learning must be based on providing appropriate educational experiences at the appropriate level of challenge in order to ensure maximum student achievement.
6. High levels of student achievement are the benchmarks for effective curriculum (design) and instruction (delivery).

THE PLANNED AND WRITTEN CURRICULUM

The Board expects that learning will be enhanced by adherence to a curriculum that promotes continuity and cumulative acquisition of skills and knowledge from grade to grade and from school to school. The curriculum should reflect the best knowledge of the growth and development of learners, the needs of learners based on the nature of society, the desires of the residents and taxpayers of the district, state laws, and State Board rules.

The focus of the curriculum will ensure:

- Emphasis on reading at grade level
- Mastery of basic skills of writing and mathematics, and
- Objectives derived from state and national assessments.

The curriculum is designed to provide teachers and students with the board's expectations of what students are to learn. Teachers are expected to teach the curriculum of the district.

Subject area written curriculum and instructional guides shall be developed for all grade levels and subjects in the district. The expectations are that:

1. All curriculum will be documented in writing;
2. The curriculum will be reviewed and updated as needed on a regular cycle of review;
3. Teachers will have copies of guides and use the objectives in the guides to develop daily lesson plans; and
4. Administrators will work with teachers to maintain consistency between the written curriculum and the curriculum objectives actually taught.

Instructional resources such as personnel, textbooks, software, and other materials shall be selected based upon their alignment with the curriculum objectives and curriculum priorities of the district.

Staff development will be designed and implemented to prepare staff members to teach the designed curriculum and will use effective change processes for long-term institutionalization.

THE TAUGHT CURRICULUM

The Board has several expectations of the teaching process. There must be assurance that teachers and their colleagues are working toward a common set of student objectives. All faculty members have a responsibility not only to contribute to the refinements of the written curriculum, but also to teach to the curriculum objectives. Teachers are required to use the district curriculum and instruction guide as their primary source of instructional direction. The principal shall ensure that optimum use is made of available written curriculum materials and instructional time.

The implementation of the curriculum will be aligned with the planned and written curriculum, as presented to students by teachers, and the assessed curriculum. Each of these three components of the curriculum shall be matched to bring about a high degree of consistency.

All programs, including those for special population students, are to be aligned to the district curriculum. Further, they are to be integrated in their delivery approach.

All curriculum decisions, including but not limited to elimination or addition of programs and courses and extensive content alteration, will be subject to Board approval. Since the curriculum is a system decision, not a campus or employee decision, curriculum proposals from employees will be presented first to central administration. If the proposal is acceptable at that level, it will then be presented to the Board.

Curriculum and instruction guides shall be provided for all subject areas and courses to assist teachers in their teaching. The format for these guides will be a collaborative district-level decision. The guides will:

1. Reflect alignment to State of Idaho standards;
2. Include scope and sequence, objectives to be taught, assessments in acceptable format, aligned resources, time frame, and instructional strategies; and
3. Include the superintendent's approval date on the cover.

Proposed curriculum and instruction guides will be reviewed by external experts prior to adoption, whenever possible.

Curriculum and instruction guides shall serve as the framework from which a teacher will develop units of study, individual lesson plans, and approaches to instruction that will serve the student's particular needs at a particular time. The guides shall be used to map a logical sequence of instruction.

In addition to consistent delivery of the objectives in the curriculum, instructional delivery shall be based on sound teaching principles grounded in educational research. Instructional supervision efforts shall focus on these sound teaching principles. This systematic process shall include:

1. Establishing a school climate that continually affirms the worth and diversity of all students.
2. Expecting that all students will perform at high levels of learning.
3. Ensuring that all students experience opportunities for personal success.
4. Varying the time for learning according to the needs of each student and the complexity of the task.
5. Having both staff members and students take responsibility for successful learning.
6. Assessing current student skills or learning for instructional assignment.
7. Analyzing the content of each objective so that instructional strategies match content and assessment.

8. When appropriate, sequencing tasks into a hierarchy of learning skills to maximize the effectiveness of instructional delivery.
9. Orienting students to the objectives to be learned.
10. Initial teaching to the objective(s) that provides varied approaches, adequate practice time, and multiple opportunities for learning and success.
11. Assessing student mastery of the objective(s) to determine the need for movement to a new instructional objective, extension/enrichment, or corrections.
12. For those who attain mastery, progressing to the next objective or offering extension or enrichment.
13. For those who do not attain mastery, providing correctives and/or using different strategies until mastery is attained.

Staff development will be provided for teachers on research-based approaches to teaching to provide them with alternative ways to view the teaching act so that they may be as effective as possible.

THE TESTED CURRICULUM EVALUATION

The Superintendent or designee shall establish assessment approaches for determining the effectiveness of instructional programming at district, campus, and classroom levels. Assessments will focus on determining the extent to which students are achieving and maintaining mastery of curriculum objectives and the extent to which instructors are displaying effective conveyance of curriculum in the classrooms.

District staff shall design and use a variety of assessment approaches in determining the effectiveness of the planned and written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and instructional programs. Periodic reports shall be made to the Board concerning these assessments.

The assessed curriculum is to include the following components:

1. State-level assessments as required.
2. A district criterion-referenced assessment system that documents, records, reports, and awards credit for student skill attainment.
3. An assessment approach developed for all grade levels and courses.
4. A criterion-referenced information management system at the classroom and building levels for coordinating timely instructional planning, student assessment and placement, instructional delivery, and program evaluation.
5. A program evaluation component that guides program redesign around the district curriculum, as well as program delivery.

Teachers will conduct frequent assessment of students on the curriculum objectives. Teacher-made tests as well as criterion-referenced tests shall be used to determine patterns of student achievement. Teachers and supervisors shall use test results to assess the status of individual student achievement, to continuously regroup students

for instruction, to identify general achievement trends of various groups of students, and to modify curriculum and/or instruction as warranted by assessment results.

Principals shall review assessments to help teachers ensure the assessments are congruent with the written curriculum.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board shall:

1. Approve the curriculum scopes and sequences. Adopt multiple instructional resources for teacher use within the constraints of state laws and State Board rules.
2. Provide funding for staff development opportunities that focus on curriculum design and delivery for increased student achievement.
3. Communicate to its constituents the Board's curricular expectations.
4. Fund, through the budget process, adequate resources needed to implement the curriculum based on data.

SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent shall:

1. Implement the policy;
2. Annually report to the Board concerning implementation; and
3. Ensure that a functional, decision-making structure is in place to carry out this policy.
4. Ensure that a master long-range plan is in place for District curriculum development, revisions, program assessment, and student assessment,
5. Implement the master long-range plan, providing technical and expert assistance as required, and
6. Assist principals in the monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum.

PRINCIPALS

The principal shall:

1. Monitor the implementation of the curriculum;
2. Translate the importance of effective curriculum and instruction practices on a regular basis;
3. Observe classes, monitor lessons, and evaluate assessment materials utilized on their campus; and
4. Use, as a minimum, the following basic strategies to monitor curriculum:
 - a. Forty-five minute observations,
 - b. Frequent walk-through observations,
 - c. Conduct or review minutes of curriculum planning meetings, and
 - d. Periodic review of curriculum documents.
5. Report findings to the board.

TEACHERS

Teachers shall:

1. Teach the district curriculum,
2. Frequently assess and document student mastery of curriculum objectives and modify instruction to ensure student success; and
3. Participate in curriculum development/revision activities.

BUDGET

The administration shall ensure that the district's budget becomes a document that reflects funding decisions based on the organization's educational goals and priorities - a performance-driven budget. The budget development process will ensure that goals and priorities are considered in the preparation of budget proposals and that any decisions related to reduction or increase in funding levels will be addressed in those terms.

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