

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum development is an ongoing process in the school district and consists of both research and design. Research is the studious inquiry and critical investigation of the various content areas for the purpose of revising and improving curriculum and instruction based on relevant information pertaining to the discipline. This study is conducted both internally (what and how we are currently doing at the local level) and externally (what national standards, professional organizations, recognized experts, current research, etc., tell us relative to the content area). Design is the deliberate process of planning and selecting the standards and instructional strategies that will improve the learning experiences for all students.

A systematic approach to curriculum development (careful research, design, and articulation of the curriculum) serves several purposes:

- Focuses attention on the content standards of each discipline and ensures the identified learnings are rigorous, challenging, and represent the most important learnings for our students.
- Increases the probability that students will acquire the desired knowledge, skills and dispositions and that our schools will be successful in providing appropriate learning experiences.
- Facilitates communication and coordination.
- Improves classroom instruction.

The Director of Curriculum and School Improvement is responsible for curriculum development and for determining the most effective method of conducting research and design activities. A curriculum framework will describe the processes and procedures that will be followed in researching, designing, and articulating each curriculum area. This framework will, at a minimum, describe the processes and procedures for the following curriculum development activities to:

- study the latest thinking, trends, research, and expert advice regarding the content/discipline;
- study the current status of the content/discipline (what and how well students are currently learning);
- identify content standards, benchmarks, and grade level expectations for the content/discipline;
- describe the desired learning behaviors, teaching and learning environment related to the content/discipline;
- identify differences in the desired and present program and develop a plan for addressing the differences;
- communicate with internal and external publics regarding the content area;
- involve staff, parents, students, and community members in curriculum development decisions;

- verify integration of local, state, and/or federal mandates (MCNS, school-to-work, etc.);
- verify how the standards and benchmarks of the content/discipline support each of the broader student learning goals and provide a K-12 continuum that builds on the prior learning of each level.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent and director of curriculum and school improvement to keep the board apprised of necessary curriculum revisions, progress of each content area related to curriculum development activities, and to develop administrative regulations for curriculum development including recommendations to the board.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (2010).
Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 256.7, 279.8; 280.3 (2013).
281 I.A.C. 12.5, .8.

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District
103 Long-Range Needs Assessment
602 Curriculum Development
603 Instructional Curriculum
605 Instructional Materials

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