

Curriculum

6.100 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

6.110 THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In accordance with K.S.A. 72-8205, the board of education will prescribe the courses of study and provide rules and regulations for teaching in the district.

The board of education will adopt suitable textbooks and supplementary instructional materials in accordance with the policies of the state board of education.

All proposed courses and major curriculum revisions shall be approved by the board of education prior to implementation. Proposed courses and major curriculum revisions will be primarily initiated through the curriculum council. In case of special circumstances these revisions can be made by the board or the assistant superintendent of curriculum.

6.120 THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The superintendent of schools is responsible for the instructional program in the district. Prior to submitting proposals of curriculum revision or textbook adoptions for consideration by the board of education, the superintendent will review the proposals and submit to the board of education written recommendations concerning said proposals.

The superintendent shall be responsible for developing decision making processes for all curriculum revisions and other curriculum activities including the appointment of all curriculum committees.

6.130 THE ROLE OF THE BUILDING PRINCIPALS

Building principals are responsible for the maintenance and implementation of the adopted curriculum and as such are responsible for assessing each teacher's effectiveness in implementing that curriculum. Building principals are responsible for coordination of curriculum among the various grade levels and courses of study.

6.140 THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Teachers employed by the board of education are responsible for teaching the instructional objectives as prescribed in the district's curriculum guides for the specific courses or subject and grade levels they teach. In addition, teachers are responsible for meeting students at their level of instruction and assisting them to achieve at the highest academic level possible in an atmosphere that is both positive and supportive.

Teachers of the district are expected to keep themselves current on recent educational research in their respective content areas and pedagogy. The

district encourages teachers to implement promising researched educational practices in their classrooms to improve their instructional strategies and techniques and the learning of their students.

6.150 THE CURRICULUM COUNCIL

The role of the curriculum council is advisory and is intended to provide assistance to the superintendent in the planning and directing of curriculum development and curriculum evaluation.

The superintendent will select the membership of the council with the following guidelines: The membership of the council shall include as a minimum, a teacher, a building administrator and a parent/guardian each from the primary level (K-4), the middle school level (5-8), and the high school level. The counselor and librarian may be included.

Each appointment of membership to the council will be for a period of three years, except for parents/guardians who will be appointed annually.

The curriculum council and the superintendent are responsible for the coordination of curriculum between elementary, middle school and high school levels.

Proposed courses and major curriculum revisions, not already approved by the board, must be presented to the curriculum council for review before being recommended to the board of education.

In case of special circumstances, the principal and superintendent can make decisions about course offerings, unless previously approved by the board. The curriculum council will review course changes made by the principal and superintendent at a later date.

District patrons who have questions or concerns about the curriculum are encouraged to contact their principal, or the superintendent.

6.180 OTHER CURRICULUM

The superintendent and/or the curriculum council may appoint other non-standing curriculum committees for the accomplishment of specific stated purposes at their option. The superintendent or building principal shall serve as chairperson of said committee.

6.190 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The curriculum council will appoint subject area committees for the purpose of writing and monitoring the curriculum. These committees will be representative of each building and level and will make recommendations to the curriculum council relating to curriculum, assessment and instructional materials related to their subject area.

Recommendations must be approved by the curriculum council before they become effective or submitted to the board for approval. Each subject area committee will have a chair that sits on the curriculum council.

6.200 CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

6.210 EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be approved by the principal when specific connections to the district's curriculum can be demonstrated. Reference 2.319 policy

6.220 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All extra school activities falling within the framework of the school organization will be governed by all policies, rules and regulations of the board of education and any additional regulations or instructions of the superintendent of schools, building principal, the faculty sponsor of such activity or club, and/or the Kansas State High School Activities Association. All such extra class activities shall be conducted under the assigned direction of an employee of the district, preferable a certified teacher, who shall be responsible for attending all meetings and required activities of the organization, advise all student participants concerning appropriate standards of conduct, and keep the building principal informed of all plans and activities of the club or organization.

All extra class activities, clubs, groups and organizations shall be available to all students who meet the participation requirement as established by board policy and/or mutual consent of the building principal and each individual club or group. All monies generated by dues, money-raising events, etc., will be accounted through the school activities account.

6.230 ACTIVITY TRIPS

Student activities and activity trips are an integral part of the district's educational program. Activity trips are trips for students for the purpose of interscholastic athletics, music competitions or clinics, or debate and dramatics competitions or clinics. Requests for approval of activity trips will be judged individually by the principal on their merit and in relation to time and budget constraints.

6.240 SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY SCHOOL ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS

Participants are subject to guidelines as outlined by the USD 459 Student Substance Abuse policy as found in the student handbook.

6.300 PROCEDURES FOR PLACEMENT OF PUPILS

6.310 ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSES

The building principal is responsible for the placement of students in the classrooms. Parental/guardian request, prior to the start of the year, for pupil placement in particular classrooms will be taken into consideration,

but the final decision is an educational decision which must be based on the best interests of the student.

6.320 HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES

Pupils will be scheduled into classes through the building principal and/or counselor. In all cases, the parents and/or legal guardians will have the opportunity to provide input in the selection of courses.

Beginning with the spring of the eighth grade year a counselor will be available to work with parents/guardians in determining the appropriate educational program for their child.

6.330 PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

All programs for exceptional students shall be managed in accordance with the local plans for exceptional students, the policy and rules of the local board and the rules and regulations of the state board of education.

6.340 ACCELERATION/TESTING OUT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

The district will implement and provide for intellectually gifted students all programs and procedures as are from time to time required by the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

The district will comply with all requirements as established from time to time by the State Board of Education with regard to the identification of intellectually gifted students.

The district will establish for each student identified as gifted an individualized education program in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. Each gifted student will be permitted to test out of, or work at an individual rate, and receive credit for required or prerequisite courses, or both, at all grade levels, if so specified in that student's individualized education program.

In the event the student requests to test out of any course or class and such is recommended by the school psychologist and classroom teacher based on the social maturity and readiness of the student for the next grade level or next level of course work, the student will take a standardized test with national norms for the subject or grade level and must score at or above the 94th percentile; must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the teacher any laboratory skills required in the course, and must present a written report on a subject assigned by the teacher of the class or grade level, which to the satisfaction of the teacher demonstrates knowledge of the subject, writing skills on a par with the class or subject level and logical reasoning indicating and understanding on a par with the age level for the class or grade level.

6.400 CURRICULUM MATERIAL – SELECTION AND ADOPTION

6.410 STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

The district will maintain a comprehensive standardized testing program along with state assessments for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the educational program and the achievement of students.

Test results of the students will be made available to the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) upon request.

Parental/guardian consent must be obtained for all individually administered diagnostic educational evaluations, but is necessary for group administered achievement, aptitude, interest, or achievement tests.

If the curriculum council or the superintendent recommends a substantial change in the standardized group testing program, the proposed changes will be submitted to the board of education for their consideration.

6.420 SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTBOOK MATERIALS

Each year the district will review the textbooks and supplementary textbook materials being used. If the curriculum review demonstrates the need for a major updating and/or replacing materials in any particular area, the following procedures will be followed:

The subject area curriculum committee will develop a recommendation for materials adoption. The committee will solicit sample materials for the publication companies, review the materials in light of school district goals, establish the reading levels for the materials, and submit their recommendations to the board of education for consideration.

6.430 LIBRARY/MEDIA MATERIAL SELECTION

6.431 Objectives

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide materials representative of many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of material of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

6.432 Authority and Responsibility

The responsibility for book selection, as for library activities, rests with the media specialist, who operates under the policies approved by the school's administration: principal, superintendent of schools, and board of education.

6.433 Selection and Evaluation of Materials

Selection will be a cooperative process with teachers, administrators, media specialists, and sometimes students cooperating through individual and committee study and recommendation. It will be done through the aid of reading, examining, and checking such standard evaluation aids as standard catalogs, authorized bibliographies, and book review digests (Ex. Booklist, School Library Journal, Library Journal). The responsibility shall rest with the media specialist.

Certain criteria are to be considered in evaluating new materials to be purchased:

- A. Materials are to be essential and appropriate for subject development.
- B. Materials are to be factually accurate and objective in presentation.
- C. Materials are to contribute to literary appreciation or have aesthetic value.
- D. Materials are to be selected because of the content and emphasis on the entire work.
- E. Materials are to be selected because authors are competent and qualified in the field.
- F. Materials on controversial issues are to be represented by both sides of the issue in an objective way.
- G. Format and readability and age-appropriateness of the materials are to be considered.

Deselection of Library Materials:

Rationale:

Deselection of the library collection is to be done periodically by the library media specialist. This process is necessary to keep the collection up-to-date and in good condition for the patrons.

Materials that are out-dated provide misinformation that is detrimental to the learning process, and damaged materials do not encourage students to care for or use library materials appropriately.

Criteria:

The following standards will be used for determining withdrawal of library materials:

- Use of material as dictated by current curriculum objectives
- Unnecessary duplication of the title in the collection
- Information contained in the material found to no longer be timely
- Physical condition of the material

Disposal:

Final disposal of all deselected materials is at the discretion of the library media specialist with administrative approval. This could include, but not limited to, placing in: classroom collections, other special programs, or community charities. Materials may be discarded by the library media specialist if they are in irreparable condition or are no longer of merit (as detailed in the criteria above).

6.434 Gifts

Gift materials will be accepted provided that such materials meet the criteria for selection of new materials set forth in the selection policy. Materials that are not acceptable should be refused outright.

Gifts should be acknowledged. Credit should also be given in library records. Special gift collections designed to be kept together should be discouraged.

Withdrawal of gift materials shall be left to the discretion of the media specialist with the donor having no privilege to say such action shall not be taken.

6.435 Censorship

- A. The main purpose of education is to develop the type of citizen who can freely and reasonably make his/her own judgments. Therefore, the media specialist and the district have the responsibility to make available to the students materials expressing all sides of an issue including racial, social, political and religious views.
- B. Every book or material selected for use in the libraries has been carefully considered before purchase. The whole

worth of the book or material is considered rather than isolated parts of the material. Books or materials will not be banned from the library simply because they deal with a controversial topic.

- C. This censorship policy is based on the *Library Bill of Rights and the Students' Right to Read*.
- D. Materials purchased do not necessarily reflect the personal views or beliefs of the media specialist or the administration.
- E. If a complaint is registered about material in the library, procedures outlined in policy 6.440 will be followed.

6.440 CHALLENGE PROCEDURES FOR CLASSROOM OR LIBRARY MATERIALS

Students, teachers, or other patrons of the district may challenge the appropriateness of any instructional or library materials adopted and used by the district through the filing *Request for Reconsideration of Media* Form 6.440 with the superintendent of schools. The forms are available at each school office and at the office of the superintendent of schools.

Within seven days after receiving a completed *Request for Reconsideration of Media*, the superintendent will convene or cause to be convened a challenge review committee composed of a principal, a media specialist, a teacher, and two community site council members from the school building using the material in question. In addition, the superintendent will appoint two licensed staff members from a school building not using the material in question. The superintendent of schools is an ex-officio member of all challenge review committees. The committee will review the material in question and report within fifteen days to the superintendent of schools whether or not it recommends continued use of the material. A challenge review committee may call for testimony from the person or persons who filed the *Request for Reconsideration of Media* or from other individuals.

The superintendent of schools may suspend use of any challenged material until the reconsideration process is complete.

Upon receipt of the report from a challenge review committee, the superintendent of schools will rule on the continued use of the challenged material.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MEDIA

It is the policy of Unified School District No. 459 to accept written requests for reconsideration of instructional and library materials used in our schools. Please use this form when making such a request. Copies of the established policy and procedure and additional forms are available from the office of the superintendent. Completed forms should be addressed to the superintendent.

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Address _____ Phone _____

School in which the material is used _____

Person making request represents: Individual _____

Group _____ Organization _____

To what do you object? _____

What do you feel might result from the use of the material? _____

For what age group would you recommend this material? _____

Did you read the entire book or view the entire film? _____

What parts? _____

Are you aware of the judgment of this material by experts in the field?

What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material? _____

Date

Signature

Disposition: _____

6.450 THE TEACHING OF CONTROVERSIAL AND/OR SENSITIVE ISSUES

The goals of the school district include statements which dictate the development of the ability to make sound judgments by each student. Therefore, the professional staff has the responsibility to provide instruction on issues which may be of either a controversial and/or sensitive nature. The instruction shall concentrate on the presentation of factual information as opposed to philosophical viewpoints.

The following procedures will be employed in the development and presentation of curriculum deemed to be controversial and/or sensitive in nature.

- A. **Curriculum Development and Presentation** – All significant proposed changes in methodology, content, resources, or materials will be presented to the board of education for consideration of implementation.

The presentation/instruction of controversial and/or sensitive issues will be restricted to classroom activities. School assemblies, special programs, seminars, etc., will not constitute a format for the presentation of said issues.

- B. **Parental/guardian and Student Rights** – Whenever possible, controversial and/or sensitive issues to be included in a course of study should be provided in the description of that course. Students and parents/guardians should consider the controversial and sensitive issues to be studied prior to enrolling in a course. The professional staff will provide information concerning the nature of any presentation to parents/guardians upon request. If a student or the parents/guardians of a minor student believe any instructional presentation would be contrary to their moral or religious convictions, the students will be excused from the class/presentation upon written request by the parent/legal guardian.
- C. **Appeal Procedures** – School district patrons may exercise the appeal procedures described in policy 6.440 when they believe particular controversial and/or sensitive issues should be excluded from the curriculum.

6.460 ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Definition

An assembly is the bringing together of a group of students from multiple classrooms for a special program. Assemblies may involve one or more grade levels, an entire school, or more than one school.

Purpose

Assemblies are to have well-defined goals tied to the district curriculum. They are to be within the emotional, intellectual, and social capacities of the students. Assemblies could include, but are not limited to:

- “Pep” or “spirit” assemblies
- Fine arts assemblies, such as dance or music performances
- Storytelling
- Assemblies encouraging health and wellness
- Impromptu assemblies addressing events of significance

In order to prepare students for effective citizenship and to provide opportunities for critical thinking, the district encourages an impartial study of issues in a learning environment as free from prejudice as possible. A topic typically becomes controversial when different values are brought to bear on a particular set of facts and circumstances. If a controversial topic is to be addressed in an assembly, there should be, if possible, appropriate materials and follow up activities that examine various sides of the topic. Special care is to be taken to ensure assemblies are respectful of families and children with diverse beliefs, cultures, and values. Assemblies are not to endorse, advance, or promote any particular religion or religious practice. Assemblies are also not to express disapproval of, inhibit, or disparage any particular religion or religious practice.

Responsibility for decision

With administrative approval, outside speakers or performers may be invited to make special presentations at assemblies. This approval is to be granted by the appropriate building administrator (usually the principal) for an assembly involving only one school or by the assistant superintendent of instruction and curriculum for an assembly involving more than one school. The administrator making the decision is responsible for determining that the assembly content is appropriate, and researching the presenter’s credentials. When possible, references should be obtained and investigated. The administrator needs to ensure that presentations comply with board policy as well as federal and state law. Administrators have the authority to interrupt or suspend the presentation at their discretion.

Notification

Notification of scheduled assemblies, including speaker name and content, will be provided to parents or legal guardians through electronic and/or printed material (such as district or school activity calendars, school newsletters, notes, emails, and websites).

Parents or legal guardians may request that their student be excused from an assembly. With administrative approval, high school students may also

be given the choice to opt out of an assembly. Excused students will be required to participate in an approved alternate academic activity.

6.500 OTHER GENERAL CURRICULUM POLICIES

6.510 PARENT/GUARDIAN-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Scheduled parent/guardian-teacher conferences will be held a minimum of two times during the school year. Additional individual parent/guardian-teacher conferences are encouraged.

Each building principal will be responsible for supervising the schedule for parent/guardian-teacher conferences, and every effort should be made for each teacher to meet with all parents/guardians at school during these conferences. The districtwide parent/guardian-teacher conference days will be scheduled into the yearly school calendar.

6.520 STUDENT TEACHING

The district will cooperate with universities and colleges, when appropriate, in their teaching education program by providing laboratory experiences for student teachers.

The assignment of student teachers will be directed by the superintendent. No student teacher will be assigned to a teacher without the approval of the teacher and the superintendent.

6.530 COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The district is encouraged, whenever possible, to cooperate with community organizations in offering a variety of activities and programs to patrons of the district.

6.540 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

At a regular board meeting each year, the assistant superintendent for instruction will present a report of academic achievement of students. The report will include a summary report of all achievement test scores administered during the school year.

6.550 SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS

A site council shall be established in each building in the district. Each council shall be responsible for providing advice and counsel for evaluating state, school district, and school site performance goals and objectives and in recommending methods which may be employed at the school site to meet these goals and objectives.

The membership of each council shall include, at a minimum, the building principal, and representatives of: teachers and other school personnel, parents/guardians of pupils attending the school, the business community,

and community leaders. At least one-half the membership of the councils shall be citizens other than students or staff of USD 459.

The principal in each building shall submit suggested names of individuals to be named to a council for the board's consideration. The board shall approve the membership of the site councils as recommended by the principal. Each council shall study the school's internal and external environment, including, but not limited to:

- Student learning outcomes using state and local testing information;
- Effective instructional practices used in the schools;
- School climate and student attitude towards instruction;
- Parent/guardian and community involvement and attitudes;
- Staff development programs and their relationship to student learning;
- Sensitivity to the feelings and needs of the students;

Working with other education groups, each council may help develop and evaluate school improvement plans which contain the following components:

- A plan for school improvement;
- Improvement plan outcomes based on school profile data;
- Evaluation methods to determine progress towards outcomes;
- Methods to report progress to the board, the public and the state board of education as required;
- A monitoring system which meets state board of education requirements for an audit;
- Each site council shall establish, subject to board approval, when, where, and the minimum number of meetings that are to be held.

Each council shall report to the board at least once a year.