

BIG HORN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER ONE
Box 688
Cowley Wyoming 82420
POLICIES AND REGULATIONS
FILE: IG-R

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT/ADOPTION
(Guidelines)

Curriculum and instructional development/ adoption in Big Horn County School District Number One shall conform to the following guidelines:

Section 1. Philosophy

1. All students are capable of success in attaining mastery of the instructional standards of the school.
2. The school, through its organization of resources and programs, and the staff, through its attitudes, beliefs, and practices, assumes responsibility for the success of each student.

Staff members will:

- a. Focus on the success of each individual student, altering the instructional variables, varying the time for learning, and providing additional support for students when needed;
 - b. Specifically refrain from attributing failure to the students innate ability, the type of home the student comes from, or other static factors over which the school has little or no control.
3. Success enhances positive self-concept; self-concept influences learning and behavior. Conversely, failure undermines self-concept, learning and behavior.

Each school must:

- a. Throughout all phases of school activity, provide each student with multiple opportunities for learning and success;
- b. Create a positive climate and institute practices in which the staff continually affirms both the talent and worth of each student; within this climate, constant efforts are made by all to identify and reinforce the unique talents and gifts that each student brings to the educational process.
- c. Ensure that personal interactions between staff members and students are positive.

Staff members must:

- a. Pay attention to student interests, problems and accomplishments in social interactions both in and out of the classroom;
- b. Make sure they let students know they really care;
- c. Allow and encourage students to develop a sense of responsibility and self-reliance.
- d. Model the behaviors that are desired of students: respect, positive attitude, promptness, hard work, consideration, and self-discipline.
- e. Institute practices for dealing positively and effectively with inappropriate behavior which enhances the student's respect for the school, improve the student's self-concept, and lead to self-discipline.

4. Learning is enhanced when the curriculum is pre-planned, organized around specific learning standards, and aligned to the instructional process.

The curriculum:

- a. Is designed to meet the needs of all students for successful and positive post graduate roles;
 - b. Is comprised of learning standards that have been organized and sequenced into units that provide a framework for classroom instruction and efficient monitoring of student progress;
 - c. Includes criterion-referenced standards of performance and procedures for each unit;
 - d. Includes standards within each unit that require higher-level cognitive processes;
 - e. Provides for periodic review and synthesis of previously-learned content;
 - f. Provides for alignment of standards, assessment criteria, instructional strategies, and materials;
 - g. Provides for integration between subject areas to facilitate increased inter-disciplinary learning and a more holistic focus on broader learning standards (e.g., critical thinking, reasoning, problem solving.)
5. Learning conditions are enhanced in each school when the staff is organized to provide for appropriate on-going placement of each student in the curriculum and flexible assignment to heterogeneous groups; student progress is carefully monitored and instructional support is available for all students.
 - a. The organization of each school reflects cooperative relationships and a spirit of teamwork among the staff, with all involved simultaneously committed to an instructional delivery approach that keeps each student on the cutting edge of his/her learning capacity; under placement is avoided;
 - b. Assignment of students to instructional groups is made heterogeneously on the basis of continuous assessment of performance in the curriculum, rather than on the basis of ability, intelligence, norm-referenced test, or other measures that result in the over-classification or tracking of students;
 - c. Each school has formal procedures to document, monitor and report student progress in the curriculum; additional support is provided to any student who needs help (not limited to those who are eligible for categorically-funded support.)
 - d. The primary purpose of instructional support, including categorically-funded instructional support, is to reinforce and enhance student performance in the regular curriculum, using different instructional strategies as appropriate;
 - e. Categorically-funded instructional support (e.g. Title 1, II Special Education, Gifted Education) is organized as a part of the school's total approach to providing additional help;
 - f. Instructional support is normally delivered while maintaining the student's regular instructional assignment; if an alternative assignment is determined in the best interests of the student, it should be for a specific and reasonable time period, designed to meet clearly defined curriculum standards, and with continuous coordination and monitoring using the school's established tracking records and procedures.
 6. Learning is enhanced when a systematic process of instruction is used in all classrooms, engaging each student until mastery of learning standards is attained.

This process requires:

- a. An expectation on the part of the staff that all students will master the instructional standards of the school, then trying in every way possible to help each student attain them;
- b. Maintaining a positive classroom environment based on cooperation and respect, and which discourages competition or comparisons among students;
- c. Assessing for prerequisite skills; providing opportunities for learning of such skills where necessary;
- d. Orienting and motivating students to the standards; students know what is to be learned, how it will be learned, and what must be done to demonstrate mastery;
- e. Initial teaching to the standards using instructional techniques that maintain student attention, time-on-task, motivation and high rates of success (e.g., direct instruction, guided practice, feedback, interactive teaching and questioning, and pacing.)
- f. Using a variety on instructional examples and activities that promote retention and generalization;
- g. Continuous monitoring of student learning through informal evaluation procedures during instruction and independent practice;
- h. Assigning appropriate homework to reinforce previously taught skills and concepts or to prepare students for class discussion and activities;
- i. Assessing student mastery of unit standards; for those who attain mastery, providing extension/enrichment activities; for those who do not attain mastery, providing correctives, using different teaching strategies, until standards are attained;
- j. Assigning a grade for each unit based on predetermined, criterion-referenced standards which preclude comparisons among students;
- k. Providing students the opportunity to demonstrate new levels of learning, through either corrective or enrichment activities, and amending unit grades accordingly.

7. Schools can maximize learning standards for all students by:

- a. Establishing a professional environment characterized by a willingness on the part of the staff to examine and change current practices in light of validated data;
- b. Providing the staff with favorable instructional conditions, including honest performance appraisals, reasonable class size, and adequate time for planning, coordination, communication, and problem-solving.
- c. Instituting staff development programs specifically designed to improve instructional process skills of all staff members;
- d. Engaging in practices that enhance meaningful parent participation throughout all phases of the educational process and creating an environment that is responsive to the concerns of parents regarding their child's progress.

Section 2. Effective Instruction

The Big Horn School District #1 schools are committed to creating and maintaining learning conditions that generate high levels of student learning and success, and to a continuous program of school improvement based on developing the capacity of the instructional program to produce the desired standards. The schools of Big Horn County School District # 1 acknowledge the potential and power of educational research and the impact that such data can have on school improvement.

The School Board commits to the following principles:

1. All instructional practices and policies in the schools of Big Horn County School District # 1 will be consistent with and reflect the most appropriate current data from the research literature;
2. All instructional practices and policies will be subject to constant review and revision, if needed, to ensure congruence with the best data, division philosophy, and the division's commitment to success;

3. A vigorous staff development program will be implemented and maintained to enable the staff to provide an effective instructional program.

Consistent with these principles, the School Board encourages and supports a professional environment characterized by broad staff participation, supportive relationships, an emphasis on personal and professional growth, school improvement, high expectations for individual performance, and honest responses in dealing with dysfunctional behaviors.

Section 3. Student Progress

It is the policy of the School Board that student progress and related practices reflect the following essentials:

1. Instruction will be provided to students on the basis of appropriate placement at a point in the curriculum;
2. Instruction will be provided for students as needed for mastery of prerequisite skills essential to new learning situations; correctives will be provided as needed to ensure adequate mastery of intended learning standards;
3. Schools will be organized to provide for flexible assignment of students to the most appropriate instructional group;
4. Student assignment should be made entirely on the basis of achievement and never on the basis of ability or time spent;
5. Student progress will be certified on the basis of successful learning of pre-established instruction standards/criteria;
6. Effective instruction, combined with the necessary level of support services and flexible time management, will be provided for students as an alternative to grade-level retention;
7. Any student who is not achieving at the expected rate, or any student demonstrating a pattern of academic or behavioral problems, shall receive appropriate support; no student shall be removed from his/her regular classroom environment except under such guidelines as may be developed by the Superintendent;
8. All students, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, parenthood, marriage, or innate ability, will have equal and open access to academic learning opportunities at all levels.

The Superintendent shall develop systematic procedures for ensuring effective Implementation of student progress guidelines.

Adopted Feb. 11, 1993