CLOQUET PUBLIC SCHOOLS - - DISTRICT POLICY #601

Adopted:  3/9/20, 5/13/19, 10/22/12, 1995
Revised:  10/26/2020, 3/9/20, 5/13/19, 10/22/12, 2005

601  SCHOOL DISTRICT CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION GOALS AND INCLUSIVITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

I.  PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish broad curriculum parameters for the school district that encompass the Minnesota Graduation Standards and federal law and are aligned with creating the world’s best workforce.

II.  GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of the school district is to establish the “world’s best workforce” in which all learning in the school district should be directed and for which all school district learners should be held accountable.

III.  DEFINITIONS

A.  “Academic standard” means a summary description of student learning in a required content area or elective content area.

B.  “Benchmark” means specific knowledge or skill that a student must master to complete part of an academic standard by the end of the grade level or grade band.

C.  “Curriculum” means district or school adopted programs and written plans for providing students with learning experiences that lead to expected knowledge, skills, and career and college readiness.

D.  “Instruction” means methods of providing learning experiences that enable students to meet state and district academic standards and graduation requirements.

E.  “Performance measures” are measures to determine school district and school site progress in striving to create the world’s best workforce and must include at least the following:

1.  the size of the academic achievement gap and rigorous course taking, including college-level advanced placement, international baccalaureate, postsecondary enrollment options, including concurrent enrollment, other rigorous courses of study or industry certification courses or programs, and enrichment experiences by student subgroup.

2.  student performance on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments;

3.  high school graduation rates; and
4. career and college readiness under Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, Subd. 1.

F. “World’s best workforce” means striving to: meet school readiness goals; have all third-grade students achieve grade-level literacy; close the academic achievement gap among all racial and ethnic groups of students and between students living in poverty and students not living in poverty; have all students attain career and college readiness before graduating from high school; and have all students graduate from high school.

G. “Experiential learning” means learning for students that includes career exploration through a specific class or course or through work-based experiences such as job shadowing, mentoring, entrepreneurship, service learning, volunteering, internships, other cooperative work experience, youth apprenticeship, or employment.

IV. LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PLAN

A. The school board, at a public meeting, shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world’s best workforce and includes the following:

1. clearly defined school district and school site goals and benchmarks for instruction and student achievement for all student categories identified in state and federal law;

2. a process to assess and evaluate each student’s progress toward meeting state and local academic standards, assess and identify students for participation in gifted and talented programs and accelerate their instruction, adopt procedures for early admission to kindergarten or first grade of gifted and talented learners which are sensitive to under-represented groups, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of instruction in pursuit of student and school success and curriculum affecting students’ progress and growth toward career and college readiness and leading to the world’s best workforce;

3. a system to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all instruction and curriculum, taking into account strategies and best practices, student outcomes, principal evaluations under Minn. Stat. § 123B.147, Subd. 3, students’ access to effective teachers who are members of populations under-represented among the licensed teachers in the district or school and who reflect the diversity of enrolled students under Minn. Stat. § 120B.35, Subd. 3(b)(2), and teacher evaluations under Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subd. 8, or 122A.41, Subd. 5;

4. strategies for improving instruction, curriculum, and student achievement, including the English and, where practicable, the native language development and the academic achievement of English learners;

5. a process to examine the equitable distribution of teachers and strategies to ensure low-income and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, ineffective, or out-of-field teachers;
6. education effectiveness practices that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, technology, and a collaborative professional culture that develops and supports teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness; and

7. an annual budget for continuing to implement the school district plan.

B. All students will be required to demonstrate essential skills to effectively participate in lifelong learning.

These skills include:
1. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing in the English language;
2. Mathematical and scientific concepts;
   a. Locating, organizing, communicating, and evaluating information and developing methods of inquiry (i.e. problem solving);
3. Creative and critical thinking, decision making, and study skills;
4. Work readiness skills;

C. Each student will have the opportunity and will be expected to develop and apply essential knowledge, understanding, and awareness that enables students to:
1. Live as a responsible, productive citizen and consumer within local, state, national, and global political, social, and economic systems;
2. Bring many perspectives, including historical, to contemporary issues;
3. Develop an appreciation and respect for democratic institutions;
4. Communicate and relate effectively in languages and with cultures other than the student’s own;
5. Demonstrate cultural and human understanding and awareness:
   a. Develop an understanding of different cultures
   b. Develop an understanding that diversity is a positive and desirable characteristic for the nation
   c. Respect the dignity of each individual
   d. Explore the similarities among all peoples and positive differences among all people and cultures
   e. Listen to other’s opinions and beliefs and respond appropriately
   f. Listen to other’s opinions and beliefs and respond appropriately
   g. Get accurate information that discourages stereotyping and prejudices
h. Act in a fair and just manner by supporting the inclusion of all students regardless of race, gender, religion, or disability
i. Show respect for individuals and cultures
j. Develop positive, accurate images of other cultural and racial groups
k. Develop positive, accurate images of women and people with disabilities
l. Understand, respect, and embrace differences among peoples

6. Acquire human relations skills necessary to appreciate, understand, and accept human diversity and interdependence. Special emphasis will be placed on American Indians/Alaskan natives, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, Black Americans, and Hispanic Americans. The program will reflect the wide range of contributions by and roles open to Americans – men, women, all races, and all cultures.

7. Practice stewardship of the land, natural resources, and environment.

8. Develop creativity and self-expression through visual and verbal images, music, literature, world languages, movement, and the performing arts.

9. Develop a positive self-image and sense of personal responsibility for:
   a. Establishing and achieving personal and career goals;
   b. Adapting to change;
   c. Leading a healthy and fulfilling life, both physically and mentally;
   d. Living a life that will contribute to the well-being of society;
   e. Becoming a self-directed learner;
   f. Exercising ethical behavior:

10. Develop skills and understanding so they may:
   a. Address human problems through team effort;
   b. Resolve conflicts with and among other;
   c. Function constructively within a family unit;

11. Develop an understanding and appreciation of the historical and contemporary contributions to society by persons with disabilities and the wide range of contributions by and roles open to Americans with disabilities.

12. The school district must identify, before the end of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2, all students who are not reading at grade level. Students identified as not reading at grade level by the end of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia, unless a different reason for the reading difficulty has been identified.

13. Students in grade 3 or higher who demonstrate a reading difficulty to a classroom teacher must be screened for characteristics of dyslexia, unless a different reason for the reading difficulty has been identified.
14. Reading assessments in English and in the predominant languages of district students, where practicable, must identify and evaluate students’ areas of academic need related to literacy. The school district also must monitor the progress and provide reading instruction appropriate to the specific needs of English learners. The school district must use locally adopted, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive assessment and annually report summary assessment results to the Commissioner of Education by July 1.

15. The school district must annually report to the Commissioner of Education by July 1 a summary of the district’s efforts to screen and identify students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia using screening tools such as those recommended by the Minnesota Department of Education’s dyslexia specialist. With respect to students screened or identified under paragraph (1), the report much include:
   a. a summary of the district’s efforts to screen for dyslexia;
   b. the number of students screened for that reporting year; and
   c. the number of students demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia for that year.

A student identified as having a reading difficulty must be provided with alternate instruction under Minn. Stat. § 125A.56, Subd. 1.

16. At least annually the school district must give the parent of each student who is not reading at or above grade level timely information about:
   a. the student’s reading proficiency as measured by a locally adopted assessment;
   b. reading-related services currently being provided to the student and the student’s progress; and
   c. strategies for parents to use at home in helping their students succeed in becoming grade-level proficient in reading English and their native languages.

This provision may not be used to deny a student’s right to a special education evaluation.

17. For each student who is not reading at or above grade level, the school district shall provide reading intervention to accelerate student growth and reach the goal of reading at or above grade level by the end of the current grade and school year. If a student does not read at or above grade level by the end of grade 3, the school district must continue to provide reading intervention until the student reads at grade level. Intervention methods shall encourage family engagement and, where possible, collaborations with appropriate school and community programs. Intervention methods include, but are not limited to, requiring attendance in summer school, intensified reading instruction that may require that the student be removed from the regular classroom for part of the school day, extended day programs, or programs that strengthen students’ cultural connections.
V. CURRICULUM REVIEW, STAFF DEVELOPMENT, AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

A. DAC: The District’s Advisory Council coordinates and advises and reports to the School Board regarding the School District’s curriculum development, implementation, and effectiveness; the School District’s staff development program, and the School District’s progress towards meeting its strategic plan.

B. PLCs: PLCs are professional learning communities charged with delivering curriculum standards and monitoring the learning progress of all children. PLCs will adjust instruction and resources to assure that all students develop competency with the district’s curricular goals and objectives.

C. LIEC: To aid in creating curricular offerings and a learning environment that is optimal for the Native American population attending school, school administration will meet monthly with the Local Indian Education Committee to discuss such things as appropriateness of curriculum, school environment, student and parent participation in school programs, and LIEC concurrence that the district is offering quality and appropriate curriculum experiences.

D. Shared Decision Making: The schools in the Cloquet School District participate in shared decision making. The purposes of shared decision making teams are to 1) collaborate on decision affecting the individual schools, the district, district staff and our clients/stakeholders; 2) improve students learning by collaborating with PLCs and providing representation on the District’s Advisory Council; 3) Report on annual progress towards achieving curriculum, instructional, and school goals; and 4) Work with and provide input to the DACs staff development plan to improve instructional effectiveness.

E. Staff Development: The school district shall provide for the improvement of student learning by providing staff development activities for district staff in accordance with a district staff development plan and Minnesota Statutes 122A.61, 122A.62, and related statutes. The responsibilities specified in state law for the district’s staff development committee shall be accomplished by the District’s Advisory Council (DAC). The DAC shall create the overall staff development plan, assist site professional development teams in developing site plans consistent with the goals of the district’s plan, and evaluate staff development efforts at the site level. The district staff development plan shall align with the mission and goals of the school district. School District staff will continue its long-established practice of participating in staff development and other activities which support and promote opportunities for intercultural understanding, competence, and awareness of various learning styles particular to specific cultures. See District Policy #427 regarding the staff development plan including areas of particular focus.
F. Evaluation of Curriculum and Instruction: The DAC will provide an annual instructional assessment to the school board and community. This assessment will be based on statewide testing program and data collected from the PLCs and the school sites pertaining to instructional effectiveness and progress towards meeting the school site’s and district’s goals. Multiple assessment measures will be used. The report to the board will be published on the District’s website.

Legal References:
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.018 (Definitions)
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations for Minnesota Students)
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process)
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.12 (Reading Proficiently no Later than the End of Grade 3)
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.30, Subd. 1 (Statewide Testing and Reporting System)
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.35, Subd. 3 (Student Academic Achievement and Growth)
- Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subd. 8 (Employment; Contracts; Termination)
- Minn. Stat. § 122A.41, Subd. 5 (Teacher Tenure Act; Cities of the First Class; Definitions)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.147, Subd. 3 (Principals)
- U.S.C. § 6301, et seq. (Every Student Succeeds Act)

Cross References:
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Student Achievement)