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 learning 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 superintendent or designee 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;
- 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;
- Ensure proposed curriculum complies with applicable laws;
- Align annual improvement goals with needs assessment information.
The curriculum review and revision cycle for the Pleasant Valley Community School District utilizes the following process:

**Implementation** – During the initial year, a program, utilizing new or revised materials and strategies, is implemented into the designated classrooms/curricular area. The implementation is monitored for topical development and the future development of a comprehensive written curriculum.

**Curriculum Writing** – Based upon the completed implementation, the course or content area curriculum is formally written using a prescribed design template. The template requires the identification of student outcomes, evidence that the outcomes have been attained, and the prescribed activities designed to achieve the specified goals. Content standards and grade level expectations for the content area/discipline are referenced to provide a K-12 continuum that builds upon the prior learning of each level. Specific units/topics of study are delineated along with the ordered sequence of delivery.

**Monitoring/Maintenance/Revision** – Using a curriculum mapping process and/or review, the content, skills, and assessments for a particular course or area of study are designated by months or a corresponding length of time and actively revised throughout the academic calendar. This information is used during evaluation and program definition stages of the curriculum review and revision cycle for the purpose of evaluating the strengths/weaknesses of a particular curricular area.

**Monitoring/Maintenance/Revision** – The curriculum mapping process continues for another year to record content, skills and assessments for the purpose of evaluating the strengths/weaknesses of a particular curricular area.

**Evaluation** – As a result of student achievement data, teacher implementation and assessment data, and research and current educational trends, a particular course of study is closely scrutinized to determine the correlation between current and optimal practice. The evaluation process clearly identifies curricular strengths, weaknesses, target areas, and recommended revisions. This information is used to drive the program modifications made during the program definition stage of the cycle.

**Program Definition** – The evaluation information obtained during the previous stage is utilized to review curricular materials, instructional strategies and potential course revisions. It is during this stage of the cycle that new curricular materials/resources are reviewed for possible district purchase and adoption. However, new materials are not a guaranteed outcome of this stage of the cycle, but a potential by-product of the evaluation process conducted previously.

While the cycle defined above describes the normal course of curricular review and revision in the district, the cycle does not preclude the inclusion of new courses or the adoption of new materials based upon student need and/or opportunity. The cycle merely provides a basic framework to guide decisions and ensure equitable consideration for all curricular areas.
It is the responsibility of the superintendent or designee 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.

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