

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

No.: 106
Section: PROGRAMS
Title: ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY
Date Last Revised: 10/19/15; 1/2/12

R106 ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY

Elementary Level Courses of Study

The elementary school instructional program consists of a Pennsylvania Academic Standards-based curriculum in each of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, art, and music. Appropriate grade level skills and concepts are delineated in the planned course of study for each subject area. A student's grade placement is the grade level to which s/he has normally progressed.

The primary program shall ordinarily be completed by children who are approximately 8 years of age. The intermediate level program shall ordinarily be completed by children who are approximately 11 years of age. Standards-based curriculum and instruction in the intermediate level must enable all students to reach the proficient level on the local assessment system and the Statewide assessment system.

Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student every year in the primary program. Planned instruction may be provided as separate course or other interdisciplinary activity.

- (1) Language arts, integrating reading, writing, phonics, spelling, listening, speaking, literature and grammar, and information management, including library skills.
- (2) Mathematics, including problem-solving and computation skills.
- (3) Science and technology education, involving active learning experiences for students.
- (4) Environment and ecology education, involving active learning experiences for students.
- (5) Social studies (civics and government, economics, geography and history).
- (6) Health, safety and physical education, including instruction in concepts and skills which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, the prevention of alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse, knowledge and practice of lifetime physical activities, personal fitness, basic movement skills and concepts, motor skill development, principles and strategies of movement, and safety practices in physical activity settings.
- (7) The arts, including active learning experiences in art, music, dance and theatre.

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

No.: 106
Section: PROGRAMS
Title: ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY
Date Last Revised: 10/19/15; 1/2/12

Planned instruction in the following areas shall be provided to every student every year in the intermediate level program. Planned instruction may be provided as a separate course or as an instructional unit within another course or other interdisciplinary instructional activity:

- (1) Language arts, integrating reading, writing, spelling, listening, speaking, literature and grammar.
- (2) Mathematics, including problem-solving and computation skills.
- (3) Science and technology, including instruction about agriculture and agricultural science.
- (4) Environment and ecology, including instruction about agriculture and agricultural science.
- (5) Social studies (civics and government, economics, geography and history).
- (6) The arts, including art, music, dance and theatre.
- (7) Understanding and use of library and other information sources.
- (8) Health, safety and physical education, including instruction in concepts and skills which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, the prevention of alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse, knowledge and practice of lifetime physical activities, personal fitness, basic movement skills and concepts, motor skill development, principles and strategies of movement and safety practices in physical activity settings.

Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student at least once by the end of elementary school. Planned instruction may be provided as a separate course or as an instructional unit within another course or other interdisciplinary instructional activity. See section 1511 of the School Code (24 P. S. § 15-1511).

- (1) History of the United States.
- (2) History of the Commonwealth.
- (3) Geography.
- (4) Civics.

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

No.: 106
Section: PROGRAMS
Title: ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY
Date Last Revised: 10/19/15; 1/2/12

Students who have not achieved proficiency in reading and mathematics during their primary grades (K-3), as determined by the school entity, shall be afforded additional instructional opportunities through a grade-level learning plan developed by the District. The plan will assist the student in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve at the proficient level.

Students who have not achieved proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of grade 5 as determined on State assessments shall be afforded instructional opportunities to develop knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the proficient level.

To address the issue of appropriate placement for students who demonstrate superior achievement in mathematics, a curriculum-based Mathematics Placement Test will be administered in the spring to students who have Gifted IEPs or who, during the first and second marking periods, have earned grades of Advanced in each of the mathematics standards categories as listed in the Report of Student Progress. The results of this assessment will be used to determine the appropriate grade level placement for mathematics. If a student demonstrates achievement that makes him/her eligible to study mathematics at an advanced grade level, the principal will schedule a meeting with the Coordinator of Mathematics, the building Elementary Curriculum Specialist, and the parents/guardians of the student. At this conference, the Elementary Curriculum Specialist will present the results of the placement testing and the Coordinator of Mathematics will advise the parents/guardians of the long-term course placement circumstances that will result from subject area acceleration. The parents are to be asked to submit in writing to the principal their decision about the proposed course acceleration for their student. If a student excels in language arts, science, or social studies, the classroom teacher will utilize beyond-level and/or enriching instructional materials, activities, and assignments. These may include, but are not limited to, curriculum-based beyond-level readers, computer-based instruction, etc.

If a student excels in multiple subject areas, the student may be considered for grade level acceleration.

Middle Level Courses of Study

The middle level planned instruction aligned with academic standards serves children who are approximately 11—14 years of age.

Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student in the middle level program. Planned instruction may be provided as a separate course or as an instructional unit within a course or other interdisciplinary instructional activity:

- (1) Language arts, integrating reading, writing, listening, speaking, literature and grammar.

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

No.: 106
Section: PROGRAMS
Title: ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY
Date Last Revised: 10/19/15; 1/2/12

- (2) Mathematics, including mathematical reasoning, algebra and problem-solving.
- (3) Science and technology, which involves active learning experiences and which may include laboratory experiments and instruction in agriculture and agricultural science.
- (4) Social studies (civics and government, economics, geography and history, including the history and cultures of the United States, the Commonwealth, and the world).
- (5) Environment and ecology, including social, political and economic aspects of ecology, and instruction in agriculture and agricultural science.
- (6) Information skills, including access to traditional and electronic information sources, computer use and research.
- (7) Health, safety and physical education, including instruction in concepts and skills which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, physical fitness, movement concepts, motor skill development, safety in physical activity settings, and the prevention of alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse.
- (8) The arts, including art, music, dance and theatre.
- (9) Career education, including exposure to various career options and the educational preparation necessary to achieve those options.
- (10) Technology education, emphasizing practical application of academic skills and problem-solving experiences facilitated by technology.
- (11) Family and consumer science, including principles of consumer behavior and basic knowledge of child health and child care skills.

High School Level Courses of Study

Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student in the high school program. Planned instruction may be provided as a separate course or as an instructional unit within a course or other interdisciplinary instructional activity:

- (1) Language arts, integrating reading, writing, listening, speaking, literature and grammar.

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

No.: 106
Section: PROGRAMS
Title: ADOPTION OF COURSES OF STUDY
Date Last Revised: 10/19/15; 1/2/12

- (2) Mathematics, including problem-solving, mathematical reasoning, algebra, geometry and concepts of calculus.
- (3) Science and technology, including participation in hands-on experiments and at least one laboratory science chosen from life sciences, earth and space sciences, chemical sciences, physical sciences and agricultural sciences.
- (4) Social studies (civics and government, economics, geography and history, including the history and cultures of the United States, the Commonwealth and the world).
- (5) Environment and ecology, including scientific, social, political and economic aspects of ecology.
- (6) The arts, including art, music, dance, theatre and humanities.
- (7) Use of applications of microcomputers and software, including word processing, database, spreadsheets and telecommunications; and information skills, including access to traditional and electronic information sources, computer use and research.
- (8) Health, safety and physical education, including instruction in concepts and skills which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, physical fitness, movement concepts, motor skill development, safety in physical activity settings, and the prevention of alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse.
- (9) Family and consumer science, including principles of consumer behavior and basic knowledge of child health, child care and early literacy skill development.

The following planned instruction shall be made available to every student in the high school program:

- (1) Vocational-technical education.
- (2) Business education, including courses to assist students in developing business and information technology skills.
- (3) World languages.
- (4) Technology education, incorporating technological problem-solving and the impacts of technology on individuals and society.

Lower Merion School District

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

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- (5) College-level advanced placement courses may be offered as planned instruction in the high school curriculum.

Academic proficiency is the critical element and should take priority in decisions concerning course selection. Parents/guardians are an integral part of the course selection process and are provided an opportunity to indicate for their student, applicable course selections for honors/advanced placement courses, college preparatory courses, and elective courses. Open enrollment is available for all courses; however, a decision to select an honors/advanced placement course should reflect academic proficiency and should consider teacher recommendations. Teacher recommendations are to be based upon review of the student's most recent standardized test scores, classroom performance, completion of course pre-requisites, and consultation with the department chairperson and the guidance counselor. No single criteria will automatically exclude any student from a course. Ultimately, Parents/guardians with the student's input make the final determination into which courses the student will be enrolled.

Students who have not demonstrated proficiency on their most recent state assessment tests in reading and/or mathematics will be assigned to supplemental instructional support consistent with the student's educational program and designed to assist the student to attain proficiency in the State academic standards as required by State Board of Education Regulations. Currently, this information concerning supplemental instructional support and graduation requirements as well as required and elective courses to be offered at the high school is published annually in the course selection guide while information about the middle school program is published in the student handbook.

AIDS - Education

1. The District shall provide a curriculum that is age appropriate and consistent with community values and the latest factual information relevant to the nature of HIV/AIDS and other life threatening and communicable diseases, the methods of transmission, and the methods of prevention.
2. Parents have the option to decide if their child shall participate in this curriculum. If not, alternate health assignments will be provided.
3. The District will provide all staff members with education and training that is current and appropriate to their job functions. This education and training will cover both knowledge of the disease and information needed to implement the District's policies on controlling infections.
4. The Administration will provide appropriate information and materials on the health education program to any parent who requests it.