

## CURRICULUM AND PARENTAL RIGHTS

### Background

The Board of School Directors of the Mt. Lebanon School District is responsible under the Public School Code (Section 1512) for the approval of curricula that have been recommended by the superintendent. It is the District's obligation to provide a course or courses of study adapted to the diversity in age, development, abilities, and needs of the students residing in this community. The Board of School Directors recognizes that all individuals who have a stake in the learning programs of the District, including parents and guardians of students of the District, should have opportunities to participate in the planning and evaluation of these programs. The Board further recognizes that parents and guardians of students have the right to access and review information concerning the instruction, assessment and academic progress of their children.

### Objective

It is the objective of this policy to identify the processes by which curriculum will be developed, implemented, and evaluated and to assure that parents and guardians of students can access and review information concerning the instruction, assessment, and academic progress of their children.

### Policy

It is the policy of the Board of School Directors that:

1. The community should be involved in the identification of curriculum issues and in the development of instructional goals. Before the professional staff writes curriculum designed to achieve the District's academic standards, community input will be sought as appropriate on objectives, instructional strategies, materials, and organizational patterns. Examples of opportunities for parental and community input include, but are not limited to, activities such as Middle States accreditation, regularly scheduled school board meetings, Strategic Planning, surveys, School Board program committee meetings as may occur from time to time, membership in or participation in formal curriculum committees, and individual written suggestions.
2. Curriculum shall be developed so as to implement the District's Strategic Plan and comply with state and/or federal mandates. These mandates include the parental rights specified in the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Chapter 4 Academic Standards and Assessment Regulations which assure that parents and guardians have the following:
  - (a) access to information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials, and assessment techniques;

- (b) a process for the review of instructional materials;
  - (c) the right to have their child(ren) excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs, upon receipt by the school district of a written request from the parents or guardians;
  - (d) the right to have their child(ren) excused from the State assessments if, upon inspection of the assessments, the parents or guardians find the assessments to be in conflict with their religious belief and wish their child(ren) to be excused, upon written request that states the objection to the school district superintendent;
  - (e) the opportunity for involvement in the strategic planning process under section 22 Pa. Code ' 4.13;
  - (f) the right to have their child(ren) excluded from any research studies or surveys conducted by the school district or other entities unless prior written consent has been obtained;
  - (g) the right to review the State assessments in the school district two weeks prior to their administration (or as soon as the District receives the assessments) during hours established by the Administration and convenient to the parents and guardians as determined by the Administration; and
  - (h) the right to have their child(ren) excluded from instruction regarding the prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other life threatening and communicable diseases when the instruction conflicts with the parents' or guardians' religious beliefs or principles, upon receipt by the school district of a written request for exemption.
3. Parents and guardians of students enrolled in the District have the right to access and review instructional materials for courses in which their children are enrolled and all assessment materials that have been administered to their children.
4. Upon request, parents and guardians will be provided with copies of instructional and assessment materials (except for certain confidential exams) for courses in which their children are enrolled. Requests for such copies may be written or oral and should be made directly to the teacher of the course.
- (a) Copies of instructional materials ordinarily should be provided to the parents/guardians within three (3) school days of receipt of the request for such copies.

- (b) Copies of assessment materials are available for review after such assessment materials are corrected/graded and returned to the student. Copies of such assessment materials ordinarily should be provided to the parents/guardians within five (5) school days of receipt of the request for such copies.
  - (c) Copies of final exams, exams designated as bench mark exams, placement exams, and exams which the District is required to keep confidential will not be provided; however, parents and guardians may review such assessment materials.
5. Using the District's Strategic Plan, external mandates, and staff, student, parent, and community input, the superintendent will annually present to the Board the District's priorities for curriculum evaluation and revision. The evaluation may range from a full-scale program evaluation to a less formal review. Such identification of priorities will require periodic review of all programs.

#### Administration Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of the administration to develop the procedures necessary to implement this policy, including:

- 1. making available to parents and guardians information regarding the academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials, and assessment techniques, including instructional materials for courses in which their children are enrolled and all assessment materials that have been administered to their children and developing a process for parents/ guardians to access and/or review such instructional materials and assessments administered to their children;
- 2. notifying parents and guardians of their right to have their child(ren) excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs;
- 3. making available to the public the Strategic Plan, as required by 22 Pa. Code ' 4.13;
- 4. prior to commencement of HIV/AIDS instruction, publicizing the fact that detailed curriculum outlines and curricular materials used in conjunction with the instruction are available during school hours or at teacher-parent conferences, notifying parents and guardians of their right to request exemption of their child(ren) from such instruction, and, if practical, making curriculum materials available for home instruction use by parents or guardians of a student excused from HIV/AIDS instruction; and

5. making the State assessments available to parents and guardians two weeks prior to their administration (or as soon as the District receives the assessments) during hours established by the Administration and convenient for the parents and guardians, and adopting necessary security requirements to maintain the validity of the assessments in accordance with the State assessment administration instructions.

Communication

This policy shall be communicated to all school district personnel, parents, guardians, PTAs, and the general public on an annual basis through newsletters, at open houses and through other communications sent home to parents.

Adopted October 18, 1993  
Revised March 15, 1999  
Revised October 16, 2000  
Revised March 17, 2014  
Revised March 18, 2019