601 SCHOOL DISTRICT CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION GOALS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish broad curriculum parameters for the school district that encompass the Minnesota Academic Standards and the federal 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 underrepresented 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. School district site and school site goals shall include the following:

1. All students will be required to demonstrate essential skills to effectively participate in lifelong learning. These skills include the following:

a. reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing in the English language;

b. mathematical and scientific concepts;

c. locating, organizing, communicating, and evaluating information and developing methods of inquiry (i.e., problem solving);

d. creative and critical thinking, decision making, and study skills;

e. work readiness skills;

f. global and cultural understanding.

2. Each student will have the opportunity and will be expected to develop and apply essential knowledge that enables that student to:

a. live as a responsible, productive citizen and consumer within local, state, national, and global political, social, and economic systems;

b. bring many perspectives, including historical, to contemporary issues;

c. develop an appreciation and respect for democratic institutions;

d. communicate and relate effectively in languages and with cultures other than the student's own;

e. practice stewardship of the land, natural resources, and environment;

f. use a variety of tools and technology to gather and use information, enhance learning, solve problems, and increase human productivity.

3. Students will have the opportunity to develop creativity and self-expression through visual and verbal images, music, literature, world languages, movement, and the performing arts.

4. School practices and instruction will be directed toward developing within each student a positive self-image and a 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.

5. Students will be given the opportunity to acquire human relations skills necessary to:

a. appreciate, understand, and accept human diversity and interdependence;

b. address human problems through team effort;

c. resolve conflicts with and among others;

d. function constructively within a family unit;

e. promote a multicultural, gender-fair, disability-sensitive society.

C. Every child is reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3, including English learners, and teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction, including a program or collection of instructional practices that is based on valid, replicable evidence showing that, when the programs or practices are used, students can be expected to achieve, at a minimum, satisfactory reading progress. The program or collection of practices

must include, at a minimum, effective, balanced instruction in all five areas of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension), as well as instructional strategies for continuously assessing, evaluating, and communicating the student's reading progress and needs.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 must 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.

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

6. 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.

7. 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, collaboration with appropriate school and community programs. Intervention methods may 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.

8. The school district will provide a personal learning plan for a student who is unable to demonstrate grade-level proficiency, as measured by the statewide reading assessment in grade 3. The school district will determine the format of the personal learning plan in collaboration with the student's educators and other appropriate professionals. The school district will develop the personal learning plan in consultation with the student's parent or guardian. The personal learning plan will address knowledge gaps and skill deficiencies through strategies such as specific exercises and practices during and outside of the school day, periodic assessments, and reasonable timelines. The personal learning plan may include grade retention if it is in the student's best interest. The student's school will maintain and regularly update and modify the personal learning plan until the student reads at grade level. This paragraph does not apply to a student under an Individualized Education Program.

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)
Minn. Stat. § 125A.56, Subd. 1 (Alternate Instruction Required)
20 U.S.C. § 5801, et seq. (National Education Goals 2000)
20 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)