

**SOUTH PAGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
**DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Series 600**

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

This series of the board policy manual is devoted to the goals and objectives for the delivery of the education program. The board's objective in the design, contents and the delivery of the education program is to provide an equal opportunity for students to pursue an education free of discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

In providing the education program of the school district, the board will strive to meet its overall goal of providing the students an opportunity to develop a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept in a learning environment that provides guidance and encourages critical thinking in students.

In striving to meet this overall goal, the objectives of the education program are to provide students with an opportunity to:

- Acquire basic skills in obtaining information, solving problems, thinking critically and communicating effectively;
- Become effective and responsible contributors to the decision-making processes of the social and political institutions of the community, state and nation;
- Acquire entry-level job skills and knowledge necessary for further education;
- Acquire the capacities for satisfying and responsible roles as family members;
- Acquire knowledge, habits and attitudes that promote personal and public health, both physical and mental;
- Acquire an understanding of ethical principles and values and the ability to apply them to their own lives;
- Develop an understanding of their own worth, abilities, potential and limitations; and,
- Learn and enjoy the process of learning and acquire the skills necessary for a lifetime of continuous learning and adaptation to change.

An advisory committee of representatives of the school district community and the school district is appointed to make recommendations for the goals and objectives of the education program. Annually, the board will report to the committee regarding progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives of the education program.

The goals and objectives of the school district are designed to achieve the philosophy statement of the school district. An advisory committee of representatives of the school district community and the school district is appointed to make recommendations for the goals and objectives of the education program.

Short-term and long-term objectives for the education program are established annually by the board. These objectives will reflect the results of the needs assessment, recommendation of the advisory committee, recommendations from the superintendent, and changes in law.

Annually, the board will report to the committee regarding progress toward the achievement of the goals and objectives of the education program

***Note: For more detailed discussion of this issue, see IASB's Policy Primer, Vol. 19 #10 - June 8, 2007.***



## SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar will accommodate the education program of the school district. The school calendar is for a minimum of 180 days or 1080 hours and includes, but is not limited to, the days for student instruction, staff development, in-service days and teacher conferences.

The academic school year for students shall begin no sooner than August 23. Employees may be required to report to work at the school district prior to this date.

Special education students may attend school on a school calendar different from that of the regular education program consistent with their Individualized Education Program.

The board, in its discretion, may excuse graduating seniors from up to five days or 30 hours of instruction after the school district requirements for graduation have been met. The board may also excuse graduating seniors from making up days missed due to inclement weather if the student has met the school district's graduation requirements.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop the school calendar for recommendation, approval, and adoption by the board annually.

The board may amend the official school calendar when the board considers the change to be in the best interests of the school district's education program. The board shall hold a public hearing on any proposed school calendar prior to adopting the school calendar.

### Legal Reference:

Iowa Code §§ 20.9; 279.10, 280.3, 299.1

281 I.A.C. 12.1(7); 41.106.

### Cross Reference:

501.3 Compulsory Attendance

601.2 School Day

603.3 Special Education

Approved Reviewed Revised

Approved 06/11/12

Reviewed 12/15/2021

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## SCHOOL DAY

The student school day for grades one through twelve will consist of a minimum of six hours, not including the lunch period. The school day consists of the schedule of class instruction and class activities as established and sponsored by the school district. Time during which students are released from school for parent/teacher conferences may be counted as part of students' instructional time. The minimum school day will meet the requirements as established for the operation of accredited schools.

The board may define the number of days kindergarten will be held and the length of each school day for the students attending kindergarten. The school day will consist of a schedule as recommended by the superintendent and approved by the board.

The school district may also record a day of school with less than the minimum instructional hours if the total hours of instructional time for grades one through twelve in any five consecutive school days equals a minimum of thirty hours, even though any one day of school is less than the minimum instructional hours because of a staff development opportunity provided for the instructional staff or parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day. If the total hours of instructional time for the first four consecutive days equal at least thirty hours because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day, the school district may record zero hours of instructional time on the fifth consecutive school day as a school day. Schedule revisions and changes in time allotments will be made by the superintendent.

When the school is forced to close due to weather or other emergencies, the part of the day during which school was in session will constitute a school day. The superintendent will create administrative regulations necessary to utilize any remote learning opportunities that are available and permitted by law during the period of closure. The provision of special education and accommodations for students who have individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans during periods of closure will be determined by each respective IEP or Section 504 team.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to inform the board annually of the length of the school day.

Legal Reference:      34 C.F.R. sec. 300  
                             28 C.F.R. pt. 35  
                             Iowa Code § 256.7, 279.8, .10.  
                             281 I.A.C. 12.1(1), .1(7-10).

Cross Reference:      601.1    School Calendar

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## 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. The board delegates the curriculum development process to the Superintendent, who will make curriculum development recommendations and submit them to the board for final approval.

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 ensure 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 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;*
- *Involve staff, parents, students, and community members in curriculum development decisions;*
- *Verify integration of local, state, and/or federal mandates (MCNS, school-to-work, etc);*
- *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.*

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## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to keep the board apprised of necessary curriculum revisions, progress or each content area related to curriculum development activities, and to develop administrative regulations for curriculum development including recommendations to the board.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (2010).  
Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 256.7, 279.8; 280.3 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5, .8.

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District  
103 Long-Range Needs Assessment  
602 Curriculum Development  
603 Instructional Curriculum  
604.1 Virtual/Online Classes  
605 Instructional Materials



## Curriculum Implementation

Without careful and continuing attention to implementation, planned changes in curriculum and instruction rarely succeed as intended. How change is put into practice, to a large extent, determines how well it fares.

Implementation refers to what actually happens in practice as compared to what was supposed to happen. Curriculum implementation includes the provision of organized assistance to staff in order to ensure that the newly developed curriculum and the most powerful instructional strategies are actually delivered at the classroom level. There are two components of any implementation effort that must be present to guarantee the planned changes in curriculum and instruction succeed as intended:

- Understanding the conceptual framework of the content/discipline being implemented; and,
- Organized assistance to understand the theory, observe exemplary demonstrations, have opportunities to practice, and receive coaching and feedback focused on the most powerful instructional strategies to deliver the content at the classroom level.

The superintendent is responsible for curriculum implementation and for determining the most effective way of providing organized assistance and monitoring the level of implementation. A curriculum framework will describe the processes and procedures that will be followed to assist all staff in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully implement the developed curriculum in each content area. This framework will, at a minimum, describe the processes and procedures for the following curriculum implementation activities to:

- *Study and identify the best instructional practices and materials to deliver the content;*
- *Describe procedures for the purchase of instructional materials and resources (See Policy 605.1);*
- *Identify/develop exemplars that demonstrate the learning behaviors, teaching, and learning environment to deliver the content;*
- *Study the current status of instruction in the content area (how teachers are teaching);*
- *Compare the desired and present delivery system, identify differences (gap analysis), and develop a plan for addressing the differences;*
- *Organize staff into collaborative study teams to support their learning and implementation efforts (address the gaps);*
- *Provide ongoing professional development related to instructional strategies and materials that focuses on theory, demonstration, practice and feedback;*
- *Regularly monitor and assess the level of implementation;*
- *Communicate with internal and external publics regarding curriculum implementation;*
- *Involve staff, parents, students, and community members in curriculum implementation decisions.*
- *Ensure the curriculum framework complies with applicable laws;*
- *Provide professional development to staff to support effective curriculum implementation.*

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to keep the board apprised of curriculum implementation activities, progress of each content area related to curriculum implementation activities, and to develop administrative regulations for curriculum implementation including recommendations to the board.

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## Curriculum Implementation

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).  
34 C.F.R. pt. 98 (2010).  
Iowa Code §§ 216.9, 256.7, 279.8, 280.3 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.8.

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District  
103 Long-Range Needs Assessment  
505 Student Scholastic Achievement  
602 Curriculum Development  
603 Instructional Curriculum

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Regular evaluation of the total curriculum is necessary to ensure that the written and delivered curriculum is having the desired effect for students.

Curriculum evaluation refers to an ongoing process of collecting, analyzing, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid in understanding what students know and can do. It refers to the full range of information gathered in the school district to evaluate (make judgments about) student learning and program effectiveness in each content area.

Curriculum evaluation must be based on information gathered from a comprehensive assessment system that is designed for accountability and committed to the concept that all students will achieve at high levels, is standards-based, and informs decisions which impact significant and sustainable improvements in teaching and student learning.

The superintendent is responsible for curriculum evaluation and for determining the most effective way of ensuring that assessment activities are integrated into instructional practices as part of school improvement with a particular focus on improving teaching and learning. A curriculum framework will describe the procedures that will be followed to establish an evaluation process that can efficiently and effectively evaluate the total curriculum. This framework will, at a minimum, describe the procedures for the following curriculum evaluation activities:

- *Identify specific purposes for assessing student learning;*
- *Develop a comprehensive assessment plan;*
- *Select/develop assessment tools and scoring procedures that are valid and reliable;*
- *Identify procedures for collecting assessment data;*
- *Identify procedures for analyzing and interpreting information and drawing conclusions based on the data (including analysis of the performance of various sub-groups of students);*
- *Identify procedures for establishing at least three levels of performance (specific to the content standard and the assessment tool when appropriate) to assist in determining whether students have achieved at a satisfactory level (at least two levels describe performance that is proficient or advanced and at least one level describes students who are not yet performing at the proficient level);*
- *Identify procedures for using assessment information to determine long-range and annual improvement goals;*
- *Identify procedures for using assessment information in making decisions focused on improving teaching and learning (data based decision making);*
- *Provide support to staff in using data to make instructional decisions;*
- *Define procedures for regular and clear communication about assessment results to the various internal and external publics (mandatory for communication about students receiving special education services);*
- *Define data reporting procedures;*
- *Verify that assessment tools are fair for all students and are consistent with all state and federal mandates;*
- *Verify that assessment tools measure the curriculum that is written and delivered;*
- *Identify procedures for deciding when multiple assessment measures are necessary for making good decisions and drawing appropriate conclusions about student learning;*



## CURRICULUM EVALUATION

- *Identify roles and responsibilities of key groups;*
- *Involve staff, parents, students, and community members in curriculum evaluation;*
- *Ensure participation of eligible students receiving special education services in district-wide assessments.*
- *Ensure curriculum complies with applicable laws.*

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to keep the board apprised of curriculum evaluation activities, the progress of each content area related to curriculum evaluation activities, and to develop administrative regulations for curriculum evaluation including recommendations to the board.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).  
34 C.F.R. pt. 98 (2010).  
Iowa Code §§ 216.9, 256.7, 279.8, 280.3 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.8.

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District  
103 Long-Range Needs Assessment  
505 Student Scholastic Achievement  
602 Curriculum Development.  
603 Instructional Curriculum

## PILOT - EXPERIMENTAL - INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

The board welcomes new ideas in curriculum. Proposals for pilot or experimental projects will first be reviewed and analyzed by the superintendent. Projects recommended by the superintendent will be considered by the board. Pilot and experimental projects approved by the board, the Iowa Department of Education, or the U. S. Department of Education may be utilized in the education program.

Students, who may be or are asked to participate in a research or experimental project or program, must have their parents' written consent on file prior to participating in the project or program. A research or experimental program or project requiring parents' prior written consent is a program or project designed to explore or develop new or unproven teaching methods or techniques. These programs or projects are designated as research or experimental projects or programs. The educational materials of a program or project designated as a research or experimental program or project may be inspected and reviewed by the parents of the students participating or being considered for participation in the program or project. The inspection and review by the parents is in accordance with board policy 605.2, "Instructional Materials Inspection."

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (2010).  
Iowa Code §§ 279.8, .10; 280.3 (20113).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5, .8.

Cross Reference: 602 Curriculum Development  
603 Instructional Curriculum

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## BASIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The basic instruction program will include the courses required for each grade level by the State Department of Education. The instructional approach will be gender fair and multicultural.

The basic instruction program of students enrolled in kindergarten is designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits, language arts and communication skills, the capacity to complete individual tasks, character education and the ability to protect and increase physical well-being with attention given to experiences relating to the development of life skills and human growth and development.

The basic instruction program of students enrolled in grades one through six will include English-language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, physical education, traffic safety, music, and visual art.

The basic instruction program of students enrolled in grades seven and eight will include English-language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, family and consumer, career, technology education, physical education, music, and visual art.

The basic instruction program of students enrolled in grades nine through twelve will include English-language arts (8 units), social studies (5 units), mathematics (6 units), science (6 units), health (1 unit), physical education (4 unit), fine arts (3 units), foreign language (4 units), and vocational education (12 units).

The board may, in its discretion, offer additional courses in the instruction program for any grade level.

Each instruction program is carefully planned for optimal benefit taking into consideration the financial condition of the school district and other factors deemed relevant by the board or superintendent. Each instruction program's plan should describe the program, its goals, the effective materials, the activities and the method for student evaluation.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations stating the required courses and optional courses for kindergarten, grades one through six, grades seven and eight, and grades nine through twelve.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (2010).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (2010).  
Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 256.11; 279.8; 280.3-.14 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5.

Cross Reference:	102	Equal Educational Opportunity
	103	Long-Range Needs Assessment
	505	Student Scholastic Achievement
	602	Curriculum Development
	603	Instructional Curriculum



## SUMMER SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

The South Page Community School District recognizes the importance of ongoing learning opportunities for students. As such, the district shall offer summer school instruction in accordance with the following:

- The board, in its discretion, may offer summer school for one or more courses and student activities for students who need additional help and instruction or for enrichment in those areas. Upon receiving a request for summer school, the board will weigh the benefit to the students and the school district as well as the school district's budget and availability of licensed employees to conduct summer school.
- If a child who is eligible for special education has been determined to need extended school year services as necessary to receive a free appropriate public education, as determined according to state and federal law, such services shall be provided as described in the child's individualized education program.
- In additional instances as provided by law

The superintendent may develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8, .11, .68; 280.3; 282.6 (2015).  
Iowa Admin. Code. r. 281—41.106 (2015).

Cross Reference: 410.2 Summer School Licensed Employees  
505.2 Student Promotion – Retention – Acceleration  
603 Instructional Curriculum  
711.4 Summer School Transportation

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## SPECIAL EDUCATION

The board recognizes some students have different educational needs than other students. The board will provide a free appropriate public education program and related services to students identified in need of special education. The special education services will be provided from birth until the appropriate education is completed, age twenty-one or to the maximum age allowable in accordance with the law. Students requiring special education will attend general education classes, participate in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities and receive services in a general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of each individual student. The appropriate education for each student is written in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Special education students are required to meet the requirements listed for special education students in IASB sample policy 505.5 – *Graduation Requirements* and in their IEPs for graduation. It is the responsibility of the superintendent and the area education agency director of special education to provide or make provisions for appropriate special education and related services.

Children from birth through age 2 and children age 3 through age 5 are provided comprehensive special education services within the public education system. The school district will work in conjunction with the area education agency to provide services, at the earliest appropriate time, to children with disabilities from birth through age 2. This is done to ensure a smooth transition of children entitled to early childhood special education services.

***NOTE: This is a mandatory policy and reflects state and federal law. For more detailed discussion of this issue, see IASB's Policy Primers, Vol. 20 #7 – Dec. 4, 2008 and 13 #3- Jan. 22, 2001.***

### Legal Reference:

Board of Education v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176 (1982).

Springdale School District #50 v. Grace, 693 F.2d 41 (8th Cir. 1982).

Southeast Warren Comm. School District v. Dept. of Public Instruction, 285 N.W.2d 173 (Iowa 1979).

20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq.

34 C.F.R. Pt. 300 et seq.

Iowa Code §§ 256.11(7); 256B; 273.1, .2, .5, .9(2)-(3); 280.8.

281 I.A.C. 41.109; 41.404

Cross Reference:

503 Student Discipline

505.5 Graduation Requirements

506 Student Records

507.2 Administration of Medication to Students

507.8 Student Special Health Services

601.1 School Calendar

603 Instructional Curriculum

Approved 12/15/2021

Reviewed 03/06/2023

Revised 03/06/2023



## MULTICULTURAL/GENDER FAIR EDUCATION

Students will have an equal opportunity for a quality education without discrimination, regardless of their age, race, religion, creed, color, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

The education program is free of discrimination and provides equal opportunity for the students. The education program will foster knowledge of and respect and appreciation for the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. It will also reflect the wide variety of roles open to both men and women and provide equal opportunity to both sexes.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 256.11 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5(8).

Cross Reference: 102 Equal Educational Opportunity

Approved 03/06/2023

Reviewed 04/14/2025

Revised 04/14/2025

## HEALTH EDUCATION

Students in grade levels one through twelve will receive, as part of their health education, instruction about personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and non-use, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; human sexuality; self-esteem; stress management; interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; prevention and control of disease; and communicable diseases, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome. The purpose of the health education program is to help each student protect, improve and maintain physical, emotional and social well-being.

The areas stated above are included in health education and the instruction are adapted at each grade level to aid understanding by the students.

Parents who object to health education instruction in human growth and development may file a written request that the student be excused from the instruction. The written request will include a proposed alternate activity or study acceptable to the superintendent. The superintendent will have the final authority to determine the alternate activity or study.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11; 279.8; 280.3-.14 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5.

Cross Reference: 502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
603 Instructional Curriculum  
607 Instructional Services

Approved 06/11/12

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## HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STUDENT EXCUSE FORM

Student Name:		Grade:	
Parent/Guardian:		Phone #:	

Please list the curricular objective(s) from which you wish to have your child excused and the class or grade in which each is taught. An example is provided for you to follow.

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Class / Grade</u>
Ex.	To understand the consequences of responsible and irresponsible sexual behavior.	Health Education / 6
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

I have reviewed the Human Growth and Development program goals, objectives, and materials and wish my child to be excused from class when these objectives are taught. I understand my child will incur no penalty but may/will be required to complete an alternative assignment that relates to the class and is consistent with assignments required of all students in the class.

Signed:		Date:	
	(Parent or Guardian)		
Signed:		Date:	
	(School Administrator)		



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in grades one through twelve are required to participate in physical education courses unless they are excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Students may be excused from physical education courses if the student presents a written statement from a doctor stating that such activities could be injurious to the health of the student or the student has been exempted because of a conflict with the student's religious beliefs.

Students in grades 9-12 may also be excused from physical education courses if:

- the student is enrolled in academic courses not otherwise available, or
- the student has obtained a physical education waiver for a [*semester or trimester*] because the student is actively involved in an athletic program.
- the student is participating in the Legislative Page Program at the state capitol for a regular session of the general assembly; or
- the student is enrolled in a junior reserve officer training corps

Twelfth grade students may also be excused from physical education courses if the student is enrolled in a cooperative, work study or other educational program authorized by the school which requires the student's absence from school.

Students who will not participate in physical education must have a written request or statement from their parents.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 256.11 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5.

Cross Reference: 504 Student Activities  
603 Instructional Curriculum

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## CAREER EDUCATION

Preparing students for careers is one goal of the education program. Career education will be written into the education program for grades kindergarten through twelve. This education will include, but not be limited to, awareness of self in relation to others and the needs of society, exploration of employment opportunities, experiences in personal decision-making, and experiences of integrating work values and work skills into their lives.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to assist licensed employees in finding ways to provide career education in the education program. Special attention should be given to courses of vocational education nature. The board, in its review of the curriculum, will review the means in which career education is combined with other instructional programs.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11, .11A; 280.9 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5(7).

Cross Reference: 603 Instructional Curriculum

Approved 12/15/2021

Reviewed 03/06/2023

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## TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION

The school district is required to keep the practice of religion out of the school curriculum. The board recognizes the key role religion has played in the history of the world and authorizes the study of religious history and traditions as part of the curriculum. Preferential or derogatory treatment of a single religion will not take place.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure the study of religion in the schools in keeping with the following guidelines:

- the proposed activity must have a secular purpose;
- the primary objective of the activity must not be one that advances or inhibits religion; and
- the activity must not foster excessive governmental entanglement with religion.

Legal Reference: U.S. Const. amend. I.  
*Lee v. Weisman*, 112 S.Ct. 2649 (1992).  
*Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602 (1971).  
*Graham v. Central Community School District of Decatur County*, 608 F.Supp. 531 (S.D. Iowa 1985).  
Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.6 (2013).

Cross Reference: 603 Instructional Curriculum  
604.5 Religious-Based Exclusion from a School Program  
606.2 School Ceremonies and Observances

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## TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION REGULATION - RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

The historical and contemporary significance of religious holidays may be included in the education program provided that the instruction is presented in an unbiased and objective manner. The selection of holidays to be studied will take into account major celebrations of several world religions, not just those of a single religion. Holiday-related activities will be educationally sound and sensitive to religious differences and will be selected carefully to avoid the excessive or unproductive use of school time. Teachers will be especially careful in planning activities that are to take place immediately preceding or on a religious holiday.

Music, art, literature and drama having religious themes (including traditional carols, seasonal songs and classical music) will be permitted if presented in an objective manner without sectarian indoctrination. The emphasis on religious themes is only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study or presentation. Religious content included in student performances is selected on the basis of its independent educational merit and will seek to give exposure to a variety of religious customs, beliefs and forms of expression. Holiday programs, parties or performances will not become religious celebrations or be used as a forum for religious worship, such as the devotional reading of sacred writings or the recitations of prayers.

The use of religious symbols (e.g. a cross, menorah, crescent, Star of David, lotus blossom, nativity scene or other symbol that is part of a religious ceremony) are permitted as a teaching aid, but only when such symbols are used temporarily and objectively to give information about a heritage associated with a particular religion. The Christmas tree, Santa Claus, Easter eggs, Easter bunnies and Halloween decorations are secular, seasonal symbols and as such can be displayed in a seasonal context.

Expressions of belief or non-belief initiated by individual students is permitted in composition, art forms, music, speech and debate. However, teachers may not require projects or activities which are indoctrinate or force students to contradict their personal religious beliefs or non-beliefs.

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The board believes students should have an opportunity to reach their own decisions and beliefs about conflicting points of view. Academic freedom is the opportunity of licensed employees and students to study, investigate, present, interpret, and discuss facts and ideas relevant to the subject matter of the classroom and appropriate to and in good taste with the maturity and intellectual and emotional capacities of the students.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or biased positions in the classroom or through teaching methods. Teachers are not discouraged from expressing personal opinions as long as students are aware it is a personal opinion and students are allowed to reach their own conclusions independently.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure academic freedom is allowed but not abused in the classroom.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .6 (2013).

Cross Reference: 502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
603 Instructional Curriculum  
903.5 Distribution of Materials

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## TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

A "controversial issue" is a topic of significant academic inquiry about which substantial groups of citizens of this community, this state or this nation hold sincere, conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of the board that controversial issues should be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom so that students may recognize the validity of other points of view but can also learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the facts related to the controversy.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to present full and fair opportunity and means for students to study, consider and discuss all sides of controversial issues including, but not limited to, political philosophies.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues within the limits of good taste and to allow the student to express personal opinions without jeopardizing the student's relationship with the teacher.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device; however, an instructor will not be prohibited from expressing a personal opinion as long as students are encouraged to reach their own decisions independently.

The board encourages full discussion of controversial issues in a spirit of academic freedom that shows students that they have the right to disagree with the opinions of others but that they also have the responsibility to base the disagreement on facts and to respect the right of others to hold conflicting opinions.



## GLOBAL EDUCATION

Because of our growing interdependence with other nations in the world, global education is incorporated into the education program for grades kindergarten through twelve so that students have the opportunity to acquire a perspective on world issues, problems, and prospects for an awareness of the relationship between an individual's self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11, .11A (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5(11).

Cross Reference: 602 Curriculum Development  
603 Instructional Curriculum

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## CITIZENSHIP

Being a citizen of the United States, of Iowa and of the school district community entitles students to special privileges and protections as well as requiring the students to assume civic, economic and social responsibilities and to participate in their country, state and school district community in a manner that entitles them to keep these rights and privileges.

As part of the education program, students will have an opportunity to learn about their rights, privileges, and responsibilities as citizens of this country, state and school district community. As part of this learning opportunity students are instructed in the elements of good citizenship and the role quality citizens play in their country, state and school district community.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11, .11A (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.3(6), 12.5(3)(b)-(5)(b).

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District  
502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
503 Student Discipline

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## PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

The South Page Community School District recognizes that families with students of compulsory attendance age may select alternative forms of education outside the traditional school setting, including private instruction. The applicable legal requirements for private instruction, including, but not limited to those relating to reporting and evaluations for progress, shall be followed.

Except as otherwise exempted, in the event a child of compulsory attendance age as defined by law does not attend public school or an accredited nonpublic school, the child must receive private instruction. Private instruction means instruction using a plan and a course of study in a setting other than a public or organized accredited nonpublic school.

Private instruction can take the form of competent private instruction and independent private instruction. The Iowa Department of Education recognizes three options for delivery of this form of instruction: two options for delivery of competent private instruction and one option for independent private instruction.

Competent private instruction means private instruction provided on a daily basis for at least one hundred forty-eight days during a school year, to be met by attendance for at least thirty-seven days each school quarter, by or under supervision of a licensed practitioner, which results in the student making adequate progress.

Independent private instruction means instruction that meets the following criteria: (i) is not accredited, (ii) enrolls not more than four unrelated students, (iii) does not charge tuition, fees, or other remuneration for instruction, (iv) provides private or religious-based instruction as its primary purpose, (v) provides enrolled students with instruction in mathematics, reading and language arts, science, and social studies, (vi) provides, upon written request from the superintendent of the school district in which the independent private instruction is provided, or from the director of the department of education, a report identifying the primary instructor, location, name of the authority responsible for the independent private instruction, and the names of the students enrolled, (vii) is not a nonpublic school and does not provide competent private instruction as defined herein, and (viii) is exempt from all state statutes and administrative rules applicable to a school, a school board, or a school district, except as otherwise provided by law.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

***NOTE: This policy reflects Iowa law on competent private instruction and independent private instruction. For additional information, including applicable forms, please visit the "Options for Educational Choice" section of the Iowa Department of Education's website, located at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/options-educational-choice>.***

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 299, 299A.  
281 I.A.C. 31.

Cross Reference: 501 Student Attendance  
502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
504 Student Activities  
507.1 Student Health and Immunization Certificates  
604.7 Dual Enrollment  
604.9 Home School Assistance Program



## INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

The board's primary responsibility in the management of the school district is the operation and delivery of the regular education program. Generally, students attending the school district will receive the regular education program offered by the district. Only in exceptional circumstances will the board approve students receiving individualized instruction at the expense of the school district.

Recommendations from the superintendent for individualized instruction will state the need for the instruction, the objectives and goals sought for the instruction, the employee requirements for the instruction, the implementation procedures for the instruction and the evaluation procedures and processes that will be used to assess the value of the instruction.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations for individualized instruction.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11; 279.8, .10, .11; 280.3, .14; 299.1-.6, .11, .15, .24; 299A (2013).

Cross Reference: 501.12 Pregnant Students  
604.1 Competent Private Instruction

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PROGRAM FOR TALENTED AND GIFTED STUDENTS

The board recognizes some students require programming beyond the regular education program. The board will identify students with special abilities and provide education programming.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop a talented and gifted program which provides for identifying students, for program evaluation, and for training of employees.

Legal Reference:

Iowa Code §§ 257.42-.49.

281 I.A.C. 12.5(12); 59.

Cross Reference:

505 Student Scholastic Achievement

604.6 Instruction at a Post-Secondary Educational Institution

## PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

The board recognizes some students require additional assistance in order to graduate from the regular education program. The board will provide a plan to encourage and provide an opportunity for at-risk students to achieve their potential and obtain their high school diploma.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop a plan for students at-risk which provides for identifying students, for program evaluation, and for the training of employees.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 257.38-.41; 280.19, .19A (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.5(13); 33; 65.

Cross Reference: 505 Student Scholastic Achievement  
607.1 Student Guidance and Counseling Program

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## RELIGIOUS-BASED EXCLUSION FROM A SCHOOL PROGRAM

Parents who wish to have their child excluded from a school program because of religious beliefs must inform the superintendent. The board authorizes the administration to allow the exclusion if it is not disruptive to the education program and it does not infringe on a compelling state or educational interest. Further, the exclusion must not interfere with other school district operations. Students who are allowed to be excluded from a program or activity which violates their religious beliefs are required to do an alternate supervised activity or study.

In notifying the superintendent, the parents will abide by the following:

- The notice is in writing;
- The objection is based on religious beliefs;
- The objection will state which activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
- The objection will state why these activities or studies violate their religious beliefs; and
- The objection will state a proposed alternate activity or study.

The superintendent will have discretion to make this determination. The factors the superintendent will consider when a student requests to be excluded from a program or activity because of religious beliefs include, but are not limited to, staff available to supervise a student who wishes to be excluded, space to house the student while the student is excluded, available superintendent-approved alternative course of study or activity while the student is excluded, number of students who wish to be excluded, whether allowing the exclusion places the school in a position of supporting a particular religion, and whether the program or activity is required for promotion to the next grade level or for graduation.

Legal Reference: U.S. Const. amend. I.  
Lee v. Weisman, 112 S.Ct. 2649 (1992).  
Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602 (1971).  
Graham v. Central Community School District of Decatur County, 608 F.Supp. 531 (S.D. Iowa 1985).  
Iowa Code §§ 256.11(6); 279.8 (2013).

Cross Reference: 603 Instructional Curriculum  
606.2 School Ceremonies and Observances

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## INSTRUCTION AT A POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

In accordance with this policy, students in grades nine through twelve may receive academic or career and technical education credits that count toward the graduation requirements set out by the board for courses successfully completed in post-secondary educational institutions. Students and parents or guardians shall be made aware of the post-secondary instructional opportunities as part of the development of each student's individual career and academic plan as required by law. The Superintendent or designee is responsible for developing the appropriate forms and procedures for implementing this policy and the following post-secondary educational opportunities:

### **Concurrent Enrollment**

The board may, in its discretion, enter into a contractual agreement with a community college to provide courses for eligible students in grades nine through twelve when comparable courses are not offered by the school district. Notice of the availability of the concurrent enrollment program shall be included in the school district's registration handbook, and the handbook shall identify which courses, if successfully completed, generate post-secondary credit. Students shall not be charged tuition for concurrent enrollment courses and shall not be required to reimburse the school district for tuition if they do not successfully complete a course. Students or their parents or guardians may be required to pay a fee consistent with the school district's established textbook policy and other materials for the concurrent enrollment course to the extent permitted by law. Students or their parents or guardians may also be required to provide their own transportation to and from concurrent enrollment courses to the extent permitted by law. However, transportation shall be the responsibility of the school district for any contracted course that is used to meet school district accreditation requirements.

Students who successfully complete a concurrent enrollment course, as determined by the postsecondary institution, shall receive postsecondary credit in accordance with the institution's policies and high school credit that will be reflected on their high school transcript. The Superintendent or designee shall grant to a student who successfully completes a concurrent enrollment course a unit of high school graduation credit for every unit of high school level instruction successfully completed.

### **Post-Secondary Enrollment Option**

Ninth and tenth grade students who have been identified by the school district as gifted and talented, and eligible eleventh and twelfth grade students, may utilize the Post-Secondary Enrollment Option ("PSEO") program. To qualify, a course must be a nonsectarian, credit-bearing course that leads to a degree, and in the areas of: mathematics, science, social sciences, humanities, career and technical education. A course is not eligible for PSEO if a comparable course is offered by the school district. In addition, courses at a community college with which the district has a concurrent enrollment agreement are not eligible for PSEO. Students shall not be charged for tuition, textbooks, materials, or fees related to a PSEO course with the exception of equipment that becomes the property of the student.

The school district shall reimburse the post-secondary institution for tuition and other expenses for each PSEO course up to \$250. Students who successfully complete a PSEO course, as determined by the postsecondary institution, shall receive postsecondary credit and high school credit. The Superintendent or designee shall grant to a student who successfully completes a PSEO course a unit of high school graduation credit for every unit of high school level instruction successfully completed.

## INSTRUCTION AT A POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Transportation to and from the postsecondary institution is the responsibility of the student or parent or legal guardian of the student enrolled in a PSEO course. Eligible students may take up to seven hours of post-secondary credit during the summer months and receive high school credit upon successful completion of a post-secondary course. However, the student or student's parent or legal guardian are responsible for all costs associated with courses taken during the summer.

Students who fail a PSEO course and fail to receive credit are required to reimburse the school district for all costs directly related to the course up to the \$250.00 reimbursement maximum. Prior to registering, students under the age of eighteen are required to have a parent or guardian sign a form indicating that the parent is responsible for the costs of the course should the student fail the course and fail to receive credit. Reimbursement waivers may be granted by the board if sufficient verification is provided to show that the student was unable to complete the course for reasons outside the student's control, including but not limited to physical incapacity, a death in the student's immediate family, or a move out of the school district.

## Legal References:

Iowa Code §§ 256.7, .11; 258; 261E; 279.61, 280.3, 280.14

281 I.A.C. 12 and 22

## Cross References:

505 Student Scholastic Achievement

604.3 Program for Talented and Gifted Students

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## DUAL ENROLLMENT

The parent, guardian, or custodian of a student receiving competent private instruction may also enroll the student in the school district in accordance with state law and policy. The student is considered under dual enrollment. The parent, guardian, or custodian requesting dual enrollment for the student should notify the board secretary no later than September 15 of the school year in which dual enrollment is sought on forms provided by the school district. On the form, they will indicate the extracurricular and academic activities in which the student is interested in participating. The forms are available at the central administration office.

A dual enrollment student is eligible to participate in the school district's extracurricular and academic activities in the same manner as other students enrolled in the school district. The policies and administrative rules of the school district will apply to the dual enrollment students in the same manner as the other students enrolled the school district. These policies and administrative rules will include, but not be limited to, athletic eligibility requirements, the good conduct rule, academic eligibility requirements, and payment of applicable fees.

A dual enrollment student whose parent, guardian, or custodian has chosen standardized testing as the form of the student's annual assessment will not be responsible for the cost of the test or the administration of the test.

After the student notifies the school district which activities in which they wish to participate, the school district will provide information regarding the specific programs.

The applicable legal requirements for dual enrollment including, but not limited to those related to reporting and eligibility, shall be followed. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

***NOTE: This policy reflects Iowa's dual enrollment law.***

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8, 299A.  
281 I.A.C. 31.

Cross Reference: 502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
503 Student Discipline  
504 Student Activities  
507 Student Health and Well-Being  
604.1 Private Instruction  
604.9 Home School Assistance Program

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## FOREIGN STUDENTS

Foreign students must meet all district entrance requirements including age, place of residence and immunization. Foreign students must be approved by the board. The board reserves the right to limit the number of foreign students accepted. Students who are citizens of a foreign country will be considered residents if they meet one of the following requirements:

- The student resides with his/her parents(s) or legal guardian;
- The student is in the United States with appropriate documentation (Form I-20) from the United States Department of Justice-Immigration and Naturalization Services; or
- The student is a participant in a recognized foreign exchange program; and,
- The student is physically able to attend school and has provided the school district with such proof, including a current TB test.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 279.8 (2013).

Cross Reference: 501 Student Attendance  
507.1 Student Health and Immunization Certificates

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## HOME SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The board, recognizing alternatives to education outside the formal public school system, authorizes the superintendent to consider offering a home school assistance program. The decision as to if a home school assistance program will be offered will be reviewed on an annual basis. This program, if offered, will assist students receiving competent private instruction by providing licensed employees of the school district to assist the parent, guardian or legal custodian in the education of the student.

The parent, guardian or legal custodian registering for the home school assistance program will agree to comply with the requirements established by the faculty of the program.

Students registered for the home school assistance program will be counted in the basic enrollment.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 299A (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 31.

Cross Reference: 504 Student Activities  
507 Student Health and Well-Being  
604.1 Competent Private Instruction  
604.8 Dual Enrollment

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### Virtual/On-line Courses

The board recognizes that on-line coursework may be a good alternative for students to not only meet graduation requirements but, also have the opportunity to take advanced or other courses not offered by the school district.

High school students may earn a maximum of 15 credits to be applied toward graduation requirements by completing on-line courses offered through agencies approved by the board, such as the Iowa On-Line Learning. Credit from an on-line or virtual course may be earned only in the following circumstances:

- The course is not offered at the high school;
- Although the course is offered at the high school, the virtual educational setting will be more conducive to the student's individual learning needs;
- Although the course is offered at the high school, the student will not be able to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict that would keep the student from meeting graduation requirements;
- The course will serve as a supplement to extend homebound instruction;
- The student has been given a long-term suspension from the regular school setting, but educational services are to be continued; or,
- The principal, with agreement from the student's teachers and parents, determines the student requires a differentiated or accelerated learning environment.

Students applying for permission to take an online course shall complete prerequisites and provide teacher/counselor recommendations to confirm the student possesses the maturity level needed to function effectively in an on-line learning environment. In addition, the express approval of the principal shall be obtained before a student enrolls in an on-line course. The school must receive an official record of the final percentage score before credit toward graduation will be recognized.

Provided online courses are part of the student's regular school day coursework and within budgetary parameters, the costs for a virtual course, such as textbooks or school supplies, shall be borne by the school district for students enrolled full-time.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

*Note: For more detailed discussion of this issue, see IASB's Policy Primer, Vol. 19 #1-September 14, 2005.*

Legal Reference: Iowa Code § 256.9(55); 279.8  
281 I.A.C. 15

Cross Reference: 605.6 Internet Appropriate Use  
501.6 Student Transfers In

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## APPROPRIATE USE OF ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS

It is important to embrace technology that can foster a creative, interactive learning environment for students, and facilitate employee professional development and collaboration. The use of online platforms to host remote interaction between students and employees and to facilitate learning is encouraged in the district.

While student and employee instruction and communication using virtual and online platforms provides a wide array of learning opportunities, it is imperative that employees and students recognize that the use of such platforms is a privilege. Training related to the use of online learning platforms will be provided to employees and students.

The district shall carefully safeguard the right of students and employees to learn and teach in a respectful environment regardless of the method. All instruction and communication through online learning platforms should be appropriate to the age and ability of the participants. Students and employees should be aware that online platforms may be monitored by the district. Verbal and written communication occurring on these platforms may be recorded and stored by the district in accordance with applicable laws.

Any verbal or written communication on these platforms deemed to be inappropriate will subject the student and/or employee to the same disciplinary measures that would exist if the interaction took place through traditional in-person learning. Students and employees who have concerns about the proper use of these platforms are encouraged to speak with their teachers or building principal. The superintendent will make administrative regulations necessary to enforce this policy.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 991  
47 U.S.C. §254  
20 U.S.C. §6777  
Iowa Code §§ 715C

Cross Reference: 104 Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment  
401.13 Staff Technology Use/Social Networking  
506.1 Student Records  
605.4 Technology in the Classroom  
605.6 Internet Appropriate Use  
501.6 Student Transfers In

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## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION

The board has sole discretion to approve instructional materials for the school district. The board delegates its authority to determine which instructional materials will be utilized and purchased by the school district to licensed employees. The licensed employees will work closely together to ensure vertical and horizontal articulation of textbooks in the education program.

The board may appoint an ad hoc committee to assist the licensed employees in selecting instructional materials. The committee may be composed of school district employees, parents, students, community members or representatives of community groups.

In reviewing current instructional materials for continued use and in selecting additional instructional materials, the licensed employees will consider the current and future needs of the school district as well as the changes and the trends in education and society. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to report to the board the action taken by the selection committee.

In making its recommendations to the superintendent, the licensed employees will select materials which:

- support the educational philosophy, goals and objectives of the school district;
- consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
- are within the school district's budget;
- foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and difference of opinion;
- stimulate growth in factual knowledge and literary appreciation;
- encourage students to become decision-makers, to exercise freedom of thought and to make independent judgment through the examination and evaluation of relevant information, evidence and differing viewpoints;
- portray the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to all people; and,
- increase an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each member of a multicultural society.

In the case of textbooks, the board will make the final decision after a recommendation from the superintendent. The criteria stated above for selection of instructional materials will also apply to the selection of textbooks. The superintendent may appoint licensed employees to assist in the selection of textbooks.

Gifts of instructional materials must meet these criteria stated above for the selection of instructional materials. The gift must be received in compliance with board policy 704.4, "Gifts - Grants - Bequests."

The superintendent will establish additional criteria to guide the selection of instructional materials through administrative regulation, ensuring alignment with educational goals and compliance with laws.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2013).  
281 I.A.C. 12.3(12).

Cross Reference: 209.1 Ad Hoc Committees  
505 Student Scholastic Achievement  
602 Curriculum  
605 Instructional Materials

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