

# POLICY

## BOARD OF EDUCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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**Related Entries:** IFB, IFB-RA, IIB, IIB-RA  
**Responsible Office:** Deputy Superintendent of Schools

### Curriculum

#### A. PURPOSE

To provide a process to manage the curriculum by establishing the structure for curriculum design and delivery and a systematic basis for decision-making and standardized practice

#### B. ISSUE

Curriculum contains the Board of Education's prescribed elements of programs and courses, which shall state clearly and specifically what students are expected to know and be able to do, how well they will be able to do it, how they will meet their learning objectives, and by what means they will be assessed. Curriculum documents typically include rationale and purpose, scope and sequence of learning outcomes, instructional strategies, adaptations for special populations, and assessment procedures.

Curriculum is fundamental to what Montgomery County Public Schools is trying to accomplish. Consequently, it shall be regularly evaluated and revised to the level of the best models we can find, and curriculum development shall be a partnership endeavor among all stakeholders: school board members, central office administrators, curriculum coordinators, teachers and instructional staff, principals, parents, students, and community and business people.

#### C. POSITION

The Board of Education recognizes the need and value of a systematic ongoing program of curriculum review and development. The board will encourage and support the professional staff in its efforts to investigate curriculum ideas, develop and improve programs, evaluate results, and participate in staff development activities.

1. This policy encompasses the following:
  - a) The written curriculum as presented in the curriculum framework and in the curriculum guides
  - b) The taught curriculum as implemented by teachers with students
  - c) The learned curriculum as demonstrated by assessments of student performance
  - d) The ongoing staff development needed to ensure consistent implementation, monitoring, and supervision
  - e) The monitoring of curriculum implementation by teachers, principals, and central services staff
  
2. Written Curriculum
  - a) The Board of Education expects that learning will be enhanced by adherence to a curriculum that promotes continuity and cumulative acquisition and application of skills and knowledge from grade to grade and from school to school. The curriculum should reflect the best knowledge of the growth and development of learners, the needs of learners, and the desires of the community, state law, and state board of education rules.
  - b) The focus of the curriculum shall promote:
    - (1) An opportunity for every student to participate
    - (2) Achievement at the highest level in every curricular area for every student
    - (3) Objectives derived from local, state, national, and international standards as appropriate in all subject areas
  - c) The curriculum shall provide teachers, students, and parents with the Board of Education's expectations of what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level and course.

- d) Subject area written curriculum frameworks, scopes and sequences, expectations, curriculum guides, and material for parents shall be developed for every grade level and course.
- (1) Initial information regarding proposed curriculum development or revisions shall be presented to the Board of Education for approval to proceed with a formal request for curriculum development or revision to the Council on Instruction.
  - (2) All curriculum shall be documented in writing in a standardized format providing the following:
    - (a) The context for learning
    - (b) Content and performance standards stated clearly for teachers to understand what is expected and required of them and all students; for parents to understand what is expected of their children; and for students to understand what is expected and required of them
    - (c) A model for instruction to meet those standards for all students
    - (d) A model for assessment to monitor student progress toward those goals
    - (e) Use of approved instructional resources
  - (3) Each subject area curriculum will be reviewed on a cycle every 5 years, with at least one area reported to the Board of Education every year. The review process should include, but not be limited to, use of data, benchmarking, and communication.
  - (4) Teachers shall have copies of guides and use the standards in the guides to develop daily lesson plans.
  - (5) Principals and central services staff shall work with teachers to maintain consistency among the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and what students have learned as measured by assessments.

- e) Instructional resources such as textbooks, software, electronic resources, and other materials shall be selected based upon their alignment with the curriculum standards and priorities of the system using a uniform process.

### 3. Taught Curriculum

- a) The taught curriculum shall be aligned with the written curriculum and the assessed curriculum to bring about a high degree of consistency.
- b) All programs for all students shall be aligned to the systemwide curriculum and shall be integrated in their delivery.
- c) All curriculum decisions, including but not limited to, elimination or addition of programs and courses and extensive content alteration, shall be subject to Board of Education approval.
- d) Curriculum guides shall be used to map a logical sequence of instruction. All guides will ensure that all courses contain the appropriate content required to prepare students for assessment activities.
- e) Staff development shall be designed and implemented to prepare staff members to teach the written curriculum and shall use methodologies to ensure that staff members have appropriate knowledge, skills, and practices to teach effectively.

### 4. Learned Curriculum

- a) The superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education assessment approaches for determining the effectiveness of instruction at system, school, and classroom levels. Assessments shall evaluate the extent to which students master international, national, state, and local standards and the extent to which teachers enable students to meet those standards.
- b) A variety of assessment approaches will be used to determine the effectiveness of the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and instructional programs and courses, including pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment.

- c) The assessed curriculum shall include the following components:
  - (1) National and international assessments as appropriate
  - (2) State-level assessments as required
  - (3) Local assessments
  - (4) An electronic information management system at the classroom, school, and central office levels that will provide teachers, principals, central office, other instructional staff, and parents with regularly reported individual student data to support coordination of instructional planning, student assessment and placement, instructional delivery, and program evaluation
  - (5) A program evaluation component
- d) Teacher assessment of students on the curriculum standards shall be ongoing. Teacher-made tests, as well as local assessments, shall be used to determine patterns of student achievement. Teachers and supervisors shall use test results to assess the status of individual student achievement, to continuously regroup students for instruction, to identify general achievement trends of various groups of students, and to modify curriculum and/or instruction as warranted by assessment results.
- e) Principals shall review assessments with teachers to ensure the assessments are congruent with the written curriculum.
- f) A systematic process shall be in place for assessing/testing student performance. This process shall provide for the acquisition, analysis, and communication of student performance data to:
  - (1) Measure student progress and diagnose student needs
  - (2) Guide teachers' instruction at appropriate levels
  - (3) Guide students' learning
  - (4) Guide systemwide improvement of curriculum alignment and programmatic decisions

- (5) Communicate progress to parents to support learning

**D. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

A focused curriculum that:

1. Is well-balanced and appropriate for all students to meet needs of diverse learners
2. Conforms to state mandates regarding course offerings and essential knowledge and skills
3. Reflects current research, best practices, data, and technological advancements within the disciplines and promotes congruence among written, taught, and assessed content
4. Provides strategies for differentiation in instructional methodologies, pacing, and resources for special populations and diverse learners

**E. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

1. The Board shall:
  - a) Approve the curriculum frameworks and scopes and sequences
  - b) Provide for staff development that focuses on the necessary methodologies to increase staff proficiency in content knowledge, skills, and practices
  - c) Communicate to its constituents the Board of Education's curricular expectations
  - d) Recommend funding, through the budget process, for adequate resources needed to implement the curriculum based on data
  - e) Establish the breadth and depth of the local testing program, including what grades are tested, in which subjects, and for what purposes
  - f) Establish a process for evaluation and selection of instructional texts and materials
  - g) Establish standards for acceptable performance on assessments
  - h) Establish goals that are congruent with student performance expectations

2. The superintendent shall:
  - a) Ensure that a functional decision-making structure is in place to implement this policy
  - b) Prepare a long-range master plan for curriculum development, curriculum revisions, student assessment, and program evaluation
  - c) Prepare a long-range master plan for the electronic collection and storage of data that supports the analysis and reporting of program evaluation and student assessment data and facilitates data-based decision making at all levels
  - d) Prepare a long-range master plan for comprehensive training and staff development
  - e) Ensure that implementation of the curriculum is monitored
3. Regulations will be developed/revised as needed to implement this policy.

**F. REVIEW AND REPORTING**

1. The superintendent shall annually report to the Board of Education concerning implementation of this policy.
2. Each subject area curriculum will be reviewed on a cycle every 5 years, with at least one area reported to the Board of Education every year.
3. Periodic reports shall be made to the Board of Education concerning assessments.
4. This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Board of Education's policy on policymaking.

*Policy History:* Adopted by Resolution No. 97-01, February 13, 2001.