

# REGULATION

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Related Entries:** ABA, AEA, CEB-RA, IFB, IIB, IIB-RA

**Office:** Associate Superintendent for Instruction and Program Development

### Development and Approval of Curriculum and Supporting Materials

#### I. PURPOSES

To implement the state law and establish procedures for the development and approval of curriculum and supporting materials

#### II. DEFINITIONS

Various terms are used in the Maryland public school laws which specify local system obligations for curricular and instructional materials. Many of these materials incorporate two aspects of instruction. Both prescribed and illustrative or suggested aspects of instruction are included in such terms as "Program of Studies," "course of study," "instructional guide," "teacher's guide," etc. "Curriculum document" is defined below as a publication setting forth the prescribed MCPS curriculum. Thus, the requirements of the Maryland public school laws (see Item I. above) are implemented when the Board of Education approves MCPS curriculum documents. All other materials, by whatever names, exist to support the prescribed aspects of instruction specified in the curriculum documents.

- A. Curriculum – Prescribed elements of programs and courses, including course titles, codes, instructional objectives, content descriptions, prerequisites, time allotments, credit values, and a point of view for instruction in each area. The MCPS curriculum is based on The Goals of Education adopted by the Board of Education.
- B. Curriculum Document – A publication promulgating prescribed MCPS curriculum. The several sections of the *Program of Studies* contain the MCPS curriculum. Other MCPS publications which mandate instructional programs or practices have the status of curriculum documents.

- C. Instructional Objectives – General statements of what the student should attain. These objectives are included in the MCPS *Program of Studies* appropriate to the subject offering, grade, or age level and represent the purposes of instruction appropriate for all students. They are mandated by the Board of Education and must be addressed in each subject's instruction.
- D. Performance Objectives – Specific statements of what the student should be able to do. These objectives contained in instructional guides or formulated by teachers, assist the student in the attainment of the instructional objectives in the MCPS *Program of Studies*. Performance objectives are used for planning classroom instruction and are assigned based on a student's progress in the subject. Those appearing in teachers' guides are suggestions of ways to attain the instructional objectives.
- E. Assessment Measures – Indicators which are used to provide evidence of the attainment of instructional or performance objectives. The degree to which each student has attained these objectives is determined by performance on assessment measures.
- F. Course – The basic segment of instruction for curricular and administrative purposes, developed about a related set of instructional objectives. All approved courses are included in the *Program of Studies* as either one-semester or one-year offerings.
- G. Unit – A segment of instruction, usually smaller than a course.
- H. Program – A related set of instructional objectives spanning one or more grade levels or a group of courses. (The courses may be related over grades or across subject areas.) The term is used as narrowly as "the automotive mechanics program" or as broadly as "the elementary school program."
- I. Supporting Materials (Curriculum Materials)
  - 1. Instructional Materials – These items, purchased or developed by MCPS, which are designed to impart information to the learner in the teaching-learning process. Instructional materials may be consumable and expendable. MCPS-developed instructional materials include such items as charts, films, filmstrips, videotapes, games, maps, models, microfilms, recording, programmed materials, slides, specimens, worksheets, learning packets, exercises, or reading.
  - 2. Instructional Guides – Written materials developed by MCPS to aid the teacher and school-based administrator in planning for one or more aspects of instruction: use of time, published materials, equipment, or facilities, completion of forms and

procedures, learning activities, etc. These written materials include teachers' guides, the *Program of Studies*, resource guides, administrators' handbooks, scope and sequence charts, manuals, etc. Instructional guides support implementation of the *Program of Studies*, suggesting how instructional objectives or other prescribed elements of a course or sequence may be taught and assessed.

- J. Pilot Test – A tryout of a program or course usually in a small number of schools and classrooms, to determine its value and whether it should be included in the *Program of Studies*.

### III. PROCEDURES

#### A. Proposals for the Development<sup>1</sup> of Curriculum and Supporting Materials

##### 1. Role of the Office of Instruction and Program Development

The staff of the Office of Instruction and Program Development is responsible for:

- a) Initiating proposals for the development of curriculum and supporting materials
- b) Encouraging the submission of proposals for curriculum development and instructional improvement from the schools and the community, and assisting individuals and groups in the development of ideas for further consideration
- c) Coordinating the evaluation of proposals initiated within or outside the department and employing consultant aid as needed from specialists, laypersons, and a broad base of MCPS personnel

##### 2. Proposals Initiated Outside the Office of Instruction and Program Development

- a) A proposal for a new or revised program or course, can originate with any individual or group in the community or school system.

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<sup>1</sup> "Development" is used throughout this regulation to include not only the addition of new courses, units, and supporting materials but also their revision and/or rescission.

- (1) Teachers, students, and parents submit their ideas through their school principal to the area director for educational services. Area personnel submit their proposals to the area associate superintendent through the area director for educational services. The area director of educational services submits a statement of the purpose, content, instructional objectives, and relationship to the *Program of Studies* of the proposal to the coordinator of new program development, Office of Instruction and Program Development.

Proposals are reviewed and evaluated by appropriate subject coordinators in the Office of Instruction and Program Development in consultation with area directors of educational services and the department directors of the office.

- (2) Departments submit their ideas through their directors, using the form provided for this purpose. Personnel from other departments consult with the appropriate subject coordinators about a proposal.

- b) At each level, the reviewer of a proposal for curriculum development or for supporting material may ask for clarification or may counsel against pursuing the proposal further. However, unless the originator of the proposal withdraws it, the reviewers at each level of review, prior to review by the associate superintendent for instruction and program development, will pass the proposal along with their comments and recommendations.

B. Development of Curriculum and Recommendations for Its Approval

1. Proposals for the development of curriculum, including development of specifications, a timetable, and budget and staff requirements, are submitted to the associate superintendent for instruction and program development for approval.
2. Proposals approved by the associate superintendent for instruction and program development are assigned to a subject coordinator and are forwarded to the Council on Instruction either at the proposal stage or following further development which the associate superintendent may request. Proposals not approved are returned to the originator with comments. Reviewers of such proposals are also notified of the disposition.

3. The Council on Instruction advises the superintendent on matters pertaining to curriculum and instruction. This responsibility encompasses reviewing, evaluating, and making recommendations concerning changes in curriculum, e.g., new or revised programs or courses, including substantial changes in instructional objectives, prerequisites, content, or credit value.
  - a) In determining the need for and the extensiveness of a pilot test of new or revised programs or courses, the Council on Instruction will consider whether the proposal:
    - (1) Involves a change in the *Program of Studies* and the importance of the change
    - (2) Deals with particularly sensitive issues
    - (3) Requires a large amount of effort or expense
    - (4) Holds especially important implications for curriculum or instruction
  - b) New programs and courses generally require piloting prior to approval for inclusion in the *Program of Studies* as approved MCPS curriculum. Proposals which do not involve significant revision of the *Program of Studies* are not pilot tested unless the other three criteria in section a), items (2), (3), and (4) above indicate otherwise.
  - c) When a pilot test is recommended for new or revised curriculum, the Council on Instruction specifies the period and extent of the pilot and a time when the results of the pilot will be reported to the council with a recommendation for further action. Before a pilot test is recommended, a plan and criteria for evaluation are worked out by the subject coordinator assigned responsibility for the pilot.
4. The chairperson presents the recommendations of the Council on Instruction to the superintendent.
5. The staff of the Office of Instruction and Program Development, working with the Department of Management Information and Computer Services, provides codes for the computer applications related to the scheduling and grading of all approved courses including pilots.

C. Development of Supporting Materials and Recommendations for Their Approval

1. Proposals for the development of materials for MCPS use in supporting the *Program of Studies*, including development specifications, a timetable, and budget and staff requirements, are submitted by coordinators in the Office of Instruction and Program Development and staff members in the Department of Instructional Resources to the associate superintendent for instruction and program development for approval. Proposals not approved are returned to the originator with comments. Reviewers of such proposals are also notified of the disposition.
2. When a proposal for the development of instructional materials or guides is approved by the associate superintendent for instruction and program development, the associate superintendent assigns responsibility for coordinating that development to a coordinator in the Office of Instruction and Program Development. The development of these materials may involve tryout and revision, the need for a tryout and its extensiveness to be determined by the criteria listed in Item B.3.a) above. The materials and the program or course to which they apply may or may not be developed concurrently.
3. Administrative procedures, administrative handbooks, and other publications (when they involve particularly sensitive issues or when they contain fundamental changes in instruction or point of view about instruction) go to the Council on Instruction either at the proposal stage or following development. They are subject to the recommendations of the Council on Instruction, and the council's recommendations with regard to approval of the final draft are presented by the chairperson to the superintendent.
4. Supporting materials are developed under the leadership of the designated subject coordinator and, when they do not contain fundamental changes in instruction or particularly sensitive issues, go directly to the director of the Department of Instructional Resources for processing which includes the following reviews:
  - a) Approval of the supporting materials by an appropriate Evaluation and Selection Committee, employing specified criteria. (See the manual on *Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials*.)
  - b) Assurance of compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and policies governing the content and use of supporting materials, e.g., laws and policies regarding minority and women's rights and the preservation of privacy

- c) Assurance that all references are to supporting materials which have been approved for use in MCPS

D. Approval of Curriculum

1. The superintendent considers the recommendations of the Council on Instruction and proposes to the Board of Education revisions of the *Program of Studies* and other documents which prescribe instruction. The superintendent presents these recommendations one month prior to the date on which approval is sought. This allows time for citizen reaction in accordance with Policy IFB: *Citizens Review of Curricular and Instructional Materials*.
2. The Board of Education authorizes the publication of revisions of the *Program of Studies* and other documents as the MCPS-approved curriculum.
3. Schools may offer only programs or courses in the MCPS-approved curriculum or pilots which have been approved by the Council on Instruction. In addition, a school may pilot a program or course only upon being designated as a pilot school for that purpose by the subject coordinator assigned responsibility for the pilot.

E. Approval of Supporting Materials

1. The superintendent approves the publication of locally developed supporting materials using the procedures established in the Department of Instructional Resources manual on *Evaluation and Selection of Instruction Materials*.
2. Provisions for citizen review of supporting materials are made in accordance with Policy IFB.

*Administrative History:* Formerly Regulation No. 345-1, October 29, 1980 (directory information updated), revised December 1986.