

FAQs about proposed FPS Curriculum Policy

Q: Why has a board policy about curriculum been developed?

A: The curriculum audit conducted in November 2009 found that the “Scarcity of board policies pertaining to curriculum and instruction does not provide for quality control of the curriculum” and recommended adopting a school board policy for curriculum management. More information about the audit can be found at http://www.fayar.net/administration/curr_audit.html.

Q: Who developed the policy?

A: District curriculum supervisors developed the policy, with assistance from national experts in curriculum and district leadership. Teachers are currently providing feedback regarding the policy.

Q: What is the timeline?

A: Work on the curriculum management plan is underway, and curriculum study for Language Arts, the first content area identified for development, will begin in the fall.

Q: Why do we need a written district curriculum?

A: The curriculum audit determined district curriculum guides were needed to direct instruction and improve student performance.

Q: Who will design the curriculum?

A: Curriculum development will be overseen by the Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC), a group of teachers, principals, and administrators selected through an application process to coordinate and communicate curriculum efforts and programs district-wide. Task forces consisting of teachers, administrators and district curriculum specialists will design subject-specific curriculum.

Q: Who will determine how and when students will be assessed?

A: the task force will review the current student assessment plan for the content area following development of the scope and sequence. The task force will make recommendations as needed to the CCC. The CCC will make recommendations for appropriate assessment to the Superintendent.

Q: What about non-tested curricular areas?

A: All curricular areas will be included in the curriculum development cycle, will have curriculum guides that include student learning expectations, and will have assessments adopted or created.

Q: How do the National Standards fit in? Will they be our curriculum?

A: Arkansas has elected to participate in the Common Core (national standards). These standards will provide the foundation for FPS curriculum guides.

Q: What about our existing curriculum?

A: Although FPS lacks a written curriculum beyond the Arkansas Standards, many teachers have developed more specific curriculum for use in their classrooms. Excellent and aligned curriculum pieces will be included into the curriculum design process as appropriate.

Q: Will there be a common body of research-based instructional strategies?

A: Yes, the CCC and subject-specific task forces will identify key instructional strategies that have been found, through quality research, to increase student learning. These strategies will become a driving force in the aligned FPS professional development plan.

Q: Where does the ART of teaching fit into all of this?

A: Curriculum guides provide support for teachers regarding what to teach, and professional development will provide support for teachers about research-based instructional strategies, but teachers will need to use expertise and relationships with their students to determine how best to facilitate student learning.

Q: What is the process for getting the curriculum into the hands of the teachers?

A: Concurrent to curriculum development, a focused and aligned professional development plan will be designed. Each year some of the 60 hours of required professional development will be designated to understanding the curriculum guides and facilitating quality implementation of the curriculum.

Q: How will delivery of the curriculum be monitored?

A: As recommended through the curriculum audit, district administrators will work with teachers and principals to align current instructional staff evaluation practices with district goals.

Q: How will current programs be placed into the evaluation cycle?

A: The CCC will develop a schedule for evaluation of current programs.

Q: What will the curriculum guide actually look like?

A: Decisions regarding the specific format of curriculum guides will be made by the CCC after evaluating available electronic, single-source, user friendly options.

Q: How does this impact Curriculum Recorder?

A: Curriculum Recorder will need to be enhanced to align with curriculum guides.

Q: How does this affect the ACSIP plan?

A: Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plans will continue to be the driving force behind school-based planning.