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2428.1 STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PRIORITIES

Standards-Based Instruction

The school district shall implement a coherent curriculum for all students, including English language learners (ELLs), gifted and talented students, and students with disabilities, that is content-rich and aligned to the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). The curriculum shall guide instruction to ensure every student masters the CCCS.

Instruction shall be designed to engage all students and modified based on student performance. The curriculum shall include: interdisciplinary connections throughout; integration of 21st century skills; a pacing guide; a list of instructional materials including various levels of text at each grade; benchmark assessments; and modifications for special education students, English language learners in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:15, and gifted students.

The school district shall collect and analyze student achievement data by subgroups (such as economically disadvantaged, race and ethnicity, students with disabilities, English language learners) and make educational decisions based on such data.

The school district shall:

1. Transmit required student, faculty, school, and school district data to New Jersey Standards Measurement and Resources for Teaching (NJ SMART), the New Jersey Department of Education's data warehouse, on a schedule and in a form specified by the Department of Education;

2. Use NJ SMART and its data query resources to track student progress year-to-year and school-to-school and to identify continuously enrolled students by school and school district;

3. Ensure teachers, school administrators, and central office supervisors receive training in NJ SMART and its data query resources;

4. Analyze assessments of student progress in relation to curricular benchmarks and the results of State and non-State year-end tests reported by subgroups (such as economically disadvantaged, race and ethnicity, students with disabilities, and English language learners).

The school district central office staff shall prepare data on comparative performance for all schools in the district and make them available to the schools. This analysis shall include the following comparisons using State assessment data:

1. Each grade level across all schools within the district;

2. Schools within the district;

3. Comparable districts by district factor groups; and

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4. Data with State averages.

The school district shall ensure a free appropriate public education is available to all students with disabilities according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq., and N.J.A.C. 6A:14.

The school district shall provide English language learners with instructional services pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:15 and provide gifted and talented students with appropriate instructional services pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1.

The school district shall provide library-media services that are connected to classroom studies in each school building, including access to computers, district-approved instructional software, appropriate books including novels, anthologies and other reference materials, and supplemental materials that motivate students to read in and out of school and to conduct research. The school district will provide these library-media services under the direction of a certified school library media specialist.

Secondary Education Initiatives

The school district shall develop a plan in 2008-2009 for implementing the secondary education initiatives specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.2(c) through (e) by the 2009-2010 school year, except that secondary school districts previously subject to N.J.A.C. 6A:10 and 6A:10A shall immediately comply with the secondary education initiatives specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.2(c) through (e).

The school districts shall:

1. Have a school-level planning team to guide the development and implementation of the secondary education reforms described in N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.2. A representative group of teachers and administrators shall determine team membership and operating procedures.

2. Provide instructional services, professional development, and other support to assist secondary schools with the implementation of the secondary education initiatives specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.2.

3. Create personalized learning environments that strengthen relationships among students, teachers, staff members, families and the larger community for students in grades six through twelve. These personalized learning environments may include:

a. Small learning communities in free-standing facilities or within larger facilities;

b. Ninth grade academies where freshman students remain together and are provided with a supportive environment to enhance their successful transition to high school;

c. Student support systems where students are assigned an adult mentor or team of adults who know(s) them and can support student efforts in achieving goals and solving problems;

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d. Academies with a career focus;

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e. Multi-grade academies where students at various grade levels may remain with a core group of teachers for multiple years in an academy-type format which may be organized around a particular theme and involve interdisciplinary teaming; or

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f. Other practices for personalizing learning environments that strengthen relationships among students, teachers, staff members, families, and the larger community.

The school district shall implement academic coursework aligned to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 that prepares all students for success in postsecondary education and/or careers after graduation, including the development of academic skills integral to success in rigorous high school courses.

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Beginning in 2008-2009, all students entering grade nine shall complete by the end of their high school education, at a minimum, coursework in language arts literacy, mathematics, and science. These shall include college level preparatory English I, II, III and IV, Algebra I, Lab Biology or the equivalent content taught in an integrated or career-based format, and other coursework as specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:8.

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All required courses shall:

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1. Be developed, reviewed, evaluated, and revised by a broad cross-section of teachers, content supervisors, and Principals;

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2. Satisfy the Core Curriculum Content Standards and indicators in each content area according to the graduation requirements in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1; and

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3. Be aligned to the district curriculum which identifies the purpose of instruction, including the essential content to be mastered in each course with interim benchmarks and assessments and final assessments.

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Secondary school districts that administer the high school State assessment and in which ten percent or more of their students satisfy high school graduation requirements through the Special Review Assessment (SRA) shall submit to the Department of Education by November 15 of the subsequent school year an analysis of all students who graduated by means of the SRA in the previous school year. The analysis shall include:

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1. The names of high school courses and grades achieved for SRA students in language arts literacy, mathematics, and science;

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2. The attendance records for SRA students for each year of high school;

3. Review of the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and corresponding Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA)/New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge 8 (NJ ASK8) scores attained by students;

4. Review of whether SRA students were taught by appropriately certified staff in English, mathematics, and science in grades nine through twelve; and

5. Development of a plan for increasing the proportion of students graduating by means of the State high school assessment based on data.

Where applicable, secondary school districts shall collaborate with sending and receiving districts to implement the secondary education initiatives outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.2.

The Commissioner shall appoint and consult with an advisory committee composed of educators with experience and knowledge in secondary education to guide the implementation of secondary education reform.

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N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.1; 6A:13-2.2

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