

## Policy Code: 3115 Curriculum and Instruction Guides

The foundation of a robust educational system rests on a well-defined, written curriculum and a clear understanding of student learning. The purpose of a written curriculum is to delineate a structured framework that outlines the educational content, objectives, and instructional strategies intended to guide teaching and learning processes within schools. It serves as a roadmap for educators, providing a coherent plan that aligns with educational standards and the goals of the school district, thereby ensuring consistency and quality across all levels of instruction. Student learning, within this context, is defined as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, facilitated by the curriculum through various pedagogical approaches. It encompasses not only the cognitive development of students but also their emotional, social, and physical growth, aiming to prepare them for successful participation in society.

### Curriculum and Instruction Guides: Alignment & Approval

Curriculum and Instruction Guides are the tangible representation of the district's educational objectives. These guides document the specific content, skills, and methodologies that form the cornerstone of the district's instructional approach, ensuring educators have a clear and comprehensive roadmap for delivering high-quality education.

To uphold the highest standards of educational excellence, it is imperative that the development and revision of Curriculum and Instruction Guides are aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, alongside the specific goals and objectives outlined in the local educational program (Policy 3000), as well as any additional objectives or subject matters sanctioned by the Board. This alignment ensures the district's commitment to providing educational content that is not only current but also impactful in fostering student learning and development.

A fundamental component of the district's approach to maintaining the integrity and relevance of educational offerings involves a comprehensive review and approval process for new or revised curriculum. Proposed curriculum shifts, whether new or revised, must be submitted to the Board for adoption before implementation in schools. Proposals must detail the curriculum's objectives, content, and proposed teaching strategies, demonstrating a clear alignment with the district's goals and the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Furthermore, the alignment of the curriculum with district expectations is of paramount importance and includes the seamless incorporation of educational technology, adherence to culturally responsive teaching practices, and the unwavering commitment to promoting student well-being in conjunction with academic success. Proposals for curriculum development or revision are therefore expected to provide a comprehensive outline of how the curriculum will not only adhere to statutory requirements but also significantly contribute to the district's mission, enhance student learning outcomes, and address students' diverse needs.

### Curriculum and Instruction Guides: Requirements

To ensure that the Curriculum and Instruction Guides are aligned with the diverse educational needs of the community and maintain a high standards of excellence, the following requirements have been set forth:

- 1. Content Definition, Sequencing, and Pacing:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides must comprehensively define, sequence, and pace the educational content, including concepts, skills, knowledge, and vocabulary. It should provide a structured framework that guides educators through the effective delivery of curriculum content, ensuring that learning objectives are met in a logical and timely manner.

**2. Instructional Approach and Student Practice:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides must offer detailed suggestions for how educators should present content and how students are expected to engage with, practice, and demonstrate their understanding of the material. These suggestions should be in harmony with the district's educational vision, promoting instructional practices that are engaging, equitable, and effective for all learners.

**3. Monitoring Progress:** A variety of measures for monitoring student progress must be included, reflecting the district's vision for assessing student learning. These measures should enable educators to track and respond to student progress effectively, facilitating targeted interventions and support where necessary.

**4. Scaffolds and Differentiation Supports:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides should provide comprehensive scaffolds and supports to enable educators to differentiate instruction. This includes strategies and tools that accommodate diverse learning needs, ensuring that all students can access and engage with the curriculum content effectively.

**5. Flexibility in Pacing and Instruction:** While maintaining a commitment to on-grade-level learning, the Curriculum and Instruction Guides must allow for flexibility in pacing and instructional decision-making. This flexibility enables educators to tailor instruction to the unique needs, interests, and backgrounds of their students, fostering a more personalized and responsive learning environment.

**6. Support for Specific Student Groups:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides must integrate strategies and activities designed to support the needs of specific student groups, including but not limited to students with disabilities, English language learners, and gifted students. These supports should be woven into the fabric of the curriculum, ensuring that all students have equitable opportunities to succeed.

**7. User-Friendliness and Accessibility:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides must be user-friendly and electronically accessible to educators, students, and families, promoting widespread use and engagement.

**8. Support for In-person and Virtual Learning:** The Curriculum and Instruction Guides must outline strategies and resources that support effective learning in both in-person and virtual formats. This dual approach ensures that students can continue to learn effectively, regardless of the instructional setting, and that educators have the tools necessary to deliver high-quality instruction in any context.

**9. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Curriculum and Instruction Guides must require that all resources utilized within the district accurately reflect the diversity and backgrounds of its students, promoting relevance in educational content.

Adherence to these requirements will safeguard the integrity, enhance the vibrancy, and maximize the utility of the Curriculum and Instruction Guides, thereby not only achieving the district's high standards but also providing all students with a rich, engaging, and equitable educational experience that equips them for future success.

## **Curriculum and Instruction Guides: Use**

Curriculum and Instruction Guides are designed to provide a comprehensive framework to assist teachers in developing units of study, crafting individual lesson plans, and adopting instructional approaches tailored to meet the diverse needs of students. These guides serve as foundational tools that support educators in delivering a coherent and structured educational experience, ensuring that all

students have access to a consistent and high-quality curriculum.

- **Implementation and Sequencing**

The guides detail a logical sequence of instruction across different grade levels and course selections, emphasizing the importance of following a structured approach in core content areas such as language arts and mathematics, where the progression of learning is critical. Teachers are expected to adhere to this sequence to facilitate a cohesive learning journey for students, building upon knowledge and skills systematically.

- **Content Integration and Professional Judgment**

Educators are required to integrate the content outlined in the Curriculum and Instruction Guides into their teaching, ensuring that students are exposed to all necessary concepts and information. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to exercise their professional judgment in determining the most effective ways to implement these guides. This includes adapting instructional methods and materials as needed to address the unique learning styles, interests, and needs of their students, thereby enhancing the educational impact.

- **Accessibility and Support**

Principals play a crucial role in ensuring that teachers have easy access to the Curriculum and Instruction Guides, along with any additional materials required for effective instruction. This includes providing ongoing support and resources to facilitate the successful implementation of the curriculum, such as professional development opportunities, access to supplemental educational materials, and technological tools. Principals are also responsible for fostering an environment that supports collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers to further enhance the quality of education provided.

## **Curriculum Writing Teams**

Specialized district curriculum writing teams are responsible for the creation and updating of Curriculum and Instruction Guides. These teams include a wide range of educators, such as teachers from different grade levels and subject areas, curriculum specialists, and administrators, chosen for their expertise, experience, and dedication to educational excellence. The leader of the Instructional Service Department oversees these teams, guiding their efforts to ensure alignment with district goals, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, and strategies to address specific content areas lacking alignment.

To equip curriculum writing teams with the necessary skills and knowledge for this critical task, the district shall provide comprehensive training. This training should cover current educational research, effective curriculum design principles, and strategies for incorporating inclusive and equitable practices into curriculum materials. The goal is to ensure that curriculum writers are well-prepared to create guides that not only meet educational standards but also address the diverse needs of our diverse student population.

The update cycle for the Curriculum and Instruction Guides is strategically aligned with the North Carolina State Textbook and Instructional Material adoption cycle. This alignment enables the district to incorporate the latest and most relevant resources into the curriculum efficiently, ensuring that educational materials remain current and embody the highest standards of teaching, learning, and assessment, covering content, context, and cognitive complexity.

Furthermore, the Board directs the administration to implement an annual review of Curriculum and Instruction Guides to identify subject areas that necessitate additional focus and/or support. This

review should be informed by an analysis of student assessment results, guiding the administration to identify which objectives, contexts, cognitive types, and instructional practices require augmented budgetary support and specialized professional development efforts.

Central to the development and revision process is the Curriculum Management Coordinating Committee. This committee plays a pivotal role in ensuring vertical curriculum alignment and articulation across grade levels and subject areas. By reviewing all new and revised curriculum guides, the committee ensures that the curriculum provides a coherent and progressive educational experience for students, building upon prior knowledge and skills in a structured manner. The committee's recommendations to the Superintendent are instrumental in the approval process by the Board of Education, guaranteeing that the district's curriculum meets high standards and supports the holistic development of all students.

Legal References: [G.S. 115C-36](#), [-47](#), [-81](#)

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (Policy 3000), Curriculum Development (policy 3100), School Improvement Plan (Policy 3430), Curriculum Management Plan

Adopted:

Revised September 5, 2002, 07/18/2024

**Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools**

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