

Course Design, Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials

Purpose

This procedure guides administrators and staff in the evaluation of courses and the selection and adoption of instructional materials, using established criteria, course review committees and Instructional Materials Committee processes.

Scope

This procedure applies to the Board of Directors, Superintendent, administrators, teachers, parents or guardians, and members of the Instructional Materials Committee.

Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. District course design and core instructional materials should be regularly reviewed to ensure their ongoing alignment with state law, teaching and learning standards, and research-based best practices. All students will receive high quality core instruction and, as appropriate, strategic and intensive intervention supports matched to student needs. To that end, the Superintendent and designee(s) have established these procedures to guide staff and set forth the basic functions of review committees.
- 1.2. For the purposes of this procedure, the definitions of course design and the five types of instructional materials (core, alternative core, intervention, supplemental and temporary supplemental) described in Policy #2020 will apply.

2. COURSE DESIGN

2.1. Existing Courses

- 2.1.1. The Superintendent or designee will establish a regular cycle of course design review and development that includes examination by review committees composed of district subject area coordinators and, as appropriate, external content area experts. This review cycle should be based on student need, changing demographics and funding. The cycle should cover each content area to ensure current course relevance. The course design process should review:
 - (a) Relevance, rigor, and alignment to state learning standards.
 - (b) Efficacy of core, alternative core, and intervention instructional materials that support student learning.
 - (c) Processes and resources used to assess student progress and address teacher professional learning.

2.1.2. Recommendations for this review may lead to:

- (a) Affirmation of continued use of current processes and instructional materials.
- (b) Establishment of a timeline for completion of recommended tasks.
- (c) Creation and assignment of tasks to subcommittees as required to select, write, or revise the course design.
- (d) Recommendation of new instructional materials selection to the Instructional Materials Committee.
- (e) Design of course implementation and staff development plans.
- (f) Identification of projected budget needs in accordance with established timelines.
- (g) Maintained communications with impacted stakeholders.

2.2. **New Courses or Major Modifications to Existing Courses**

- 2.2.1. New course offerings or major course modifications that propose significant changes to course objectives or scope will be reviewed by the Superintendent or designee prior to being scheduled to ensure that the course is rigorous, utilizes appropriate instructional materials, and is a carefully considered part of the school's college and career pathways.
- 2.2.2. When the implementation of new or modified courses requires the adoption of new instructional resources, those resource recommendations will be forwarded to the Instructional Materials Committee for consideration by the process outlined below.

3. SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS – GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 3.1. Instructional materials used in the district will be classified as core, alternative core, intervention, supplemental, and temporary supplemental and shall be selected according to the procedures that follow. The principal is responsible for ensuring the continuing familiarity of his/her certificated staff with the requirement of this policy and procedure. The district office will provide such technical assistance as may be necessary to accomplish this.
- 3.2. The following staff roles and responsibilities in the selection and adoption of instructional materials will be assumed:

Instructional Material Type	Role				
	Certificated Teaching Staff	Principal	Superintendent	Instructional Materials Committee (IMC)	School Board
Core	identify		establish adoption procedure	recommend	adopt
Alternative Core	identify		designate selector		
Intervention	identify		designate selector		
Supplemental	identify	designate selector			
Temporary Supplemental	select, within district guidelines				

3.3. Instructional Material Delivery Formats

Instructional materials may be delivered in many formats, and may include textbooks, technology-based materials, or other educational media.

3.4. Open Educational Resources

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. A wide variety of free, high quality instructional content is available from supplemental to core instructional materials. District staff are encouraged to consider OER when selecting instructional materials. OER are subject to the same selection and adoption procedures as other instructional materials outlined in this document.

3.5. Technology-based Resources

When instructional materials are technology-based, district educational technology staff should be consulted regarding the technological impacts of the suggested program. Equity of access for students and teachers must be considered for all core materials delivered in digital formats.

4. SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF CORE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

4.1. Identification

Core materials shall be initially selected by such certificated staff as the Superintendent or designee may assign. Materials must meet the criteria for the selection of core materials described in section 4.2.

4.2. Criteria for Selection of Core Instructional Materials

Core instructional materials shall be selected based upon the degree to which they:

- (a) Demonstrate likelihood of impact as shown by scientific or evidence-based research.

- (b) Enable implementation of the district's developed curriculum and meet state standards and College Readiness requirements.
- (c) Provide sufficient flexibility to meet the varied needs and abilities of the students served.
- (d) Provide clear and appropriate differentiation components for English Language Learners, special education students, students with academic opportunity gaps, and highly capable students.
- (e) Where appropriate, present balanced but differing views of issues, controversial or otherwise, in order that students may develop critical analysis and informed decision-making skills.
- (f) Demonstrate consideration of appropriate format(s) (including technological, visual, and/or auditory components).
- (g) Support an equitable access to learning and learning materials for all students; including the provision of appropriate, high-quality accessible instructional materials to all students with disabilities who require them.
- (h) Are free of stereotyping and gender, race, class, and other forms of bias, recognizing that under certain circumstances biased materials may serve as appropriate resources to present contrasting and differing points of view, and biased materials may be employed in order to teach students about bias, stereotyping, and propaganda in historical or contemporary contexts. The Washington Models for the Evaluation of Bias Content in Instructional Materials, published by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) should be consulted in the selection process to further to the goal of eliminating content bias:
<https://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/InstructionalMaterialsReview.aspx>

4.3. **Instructional Materials Committee**

- 4.3.1. The Instructional Materials Committee (IMC) is formed to establish and monitor such procedures as may be necessary for the evaluation and recommendation of core materials used by the district in conformance to stated criteria. The committee will act upon requests for core material approval and will evaluate and act upon citizens' requests for reconsideration of core materials.
- 4.3.2. Committee meetings will be held on a schedule determined by the Superintendent. Special meetings may be called by the committee chairman if necessary. The committee secretary will provide department heads, principals, and program developers with copies of the committee meeting schedule and minutes as appropriate.

- 4.3.3. The committee will, at a minimum, consist of:
- (a) The Educational Service District (ESD) 101 Superintendent will serve as an ex officio member. The ESD Superintendent shall assure correlation of district adoption of K-8 materials with high school districts that may serve VSD students.
 - (b) One or more school program principal(s), representing the various school programs in the district, will serve as an ex officio member.
 - (c) One or more certified teacher(s), representing the various school programs in the district.
 - (d) One classified staff member.
 - (e) Up to three parent volunteers. State law provides that parents must make up less than one-half the committee.
 - (f) Any contractually affiliated administrator may satisfy one of the 'staff person' positions on the committee.
- 4.3.4. Members will be appointed by the Superintendent or designee and approved by the Board of Directors. The Superintendent shall submit the names of IMC members for Board approval once each school year. Exact configuration of IMC membership may vary on a yearly basis, on the recommendation of the Superintendent, subject to Board approval.
- 4.3.5. The terms of IMC membership, excluding the membership of ex officio members, shall be renewable two (2) year terms, commencing in January of each odd-numbered year.
- 4.3.5.1. In the event a membership position is vacated mid-term, the Superintendent shall appoint an alternate member to complete the term. Such appointment need not require Board approval until or unless the alternate wishes to continue serving as a member upon customary expiration of the term.

4.4. **Recommendation and Adoption of Core Instructional Materials**

- 4.4.1. The IMC will receive recommended instructional material proposals through superintendent-assigned staff. Core material will be reviewed according to superintendent-established procedures to ensure compliance with the above selection criteria and by using instructional material evaluation tools and information posted on the OSPI website at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/InstructionalMaterialsReview.aspx>
- 4.4.2. Based on their evaluation, the IMC will present recommended instructional materials to the Superintendent for final review and consideration. Based on his/her evaluation, the Superintendent will

recommend instructional materials to the Board for adoption. Core material will be approved by the Board prior to their use in classrooms. Texts selected previously are exempt from this requirement.

4.5. Regularly-Scheduled Core Material Updates

4.5.1. Any courses using OER as their core material shall annually convene a representative group of district teachers of the course to revise and improve the core material. Adaptations shall be based on teacher and student suggestions and data from state or district assessments identifying areas of lower student performance. Revised versions of the core material will be implemented for the following school year.

4.5.2. If the adaptations to the core material results in significant changes to course objectives or scope, the revised resource shall be forwarded to the Instructional Materials Committee for consideration and formal recommendation for Board adoption.

4.6. Exceptional Needs or Rapidly Changing Circumstances

The Superintendent or designee may authorize the acquisition of alternative core instructional materials to meet exceptional needs or rapidly changing circumstances. However, expanded use of core instructional materials selected for exceptional needs will require adoption through the formal process.

4.7. College in the High School, Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB)

When offered by the district, College in the High School, AP, and/or IB courses may have varying course designs as necessitated by their course credit transfer requirements.

4.8. Field Testing

4.8.1. The Superintendent or designee may consider the use of field testing as part of the adoption process. Field testing can provide a flexible opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of curricular approaches, instructional materials, and/or assessment resources through careful experimentation for an identified purpose based on student needs.

4.8.2. Trial-use core instructional material of an experimental, field-test nature may be authorized for use by the Superintendent for a period of no more than one school year prior to adoption through the formal process.

4.9. Citizen Access to View Core Materials

Members of the community are invited to review any core instructional materials in current or proposed use. Such review may be accomplished at the school, in the district office, or online. The review and examination process should be arranged in a way to avoid disrupting the educational program. The review of core materials should be undertaken with the knowledge of district objectives in mind.

5. SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF NON-CORE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

5.1. Intervention Instructional Materials

Instructional materials designed to support strategic or intensive intervention for students who are at risk of not meeting established learning standards will be approved by the superintendent or designee based upon evidence from reputable sources (e.g., National Center on Response to Intervention, Johns Hopkins Best Evidence Encyclopedia).

5.2. Alternative Core Instructional Materials

The Superintendent or designee will establish procedures through which schools may be approved to use alternative core materials for specialized course offerings or flexible learning environments. In many cases, the Superintendent may decide that selection of these alternative core materials be made by certificated staff designated by the program principal.

5.3. Supplemental Materials

5.3.1. Supplemental materials will not require IMC approval or Board adoption.

5.3.2. The Superintendent shall delegate responsibility for examining, evaluating, and selecting all supplemental and temporary supplemental materials to the principal or professional staff of the district. This includes preparing all student reading lists using state standards-aligned resources/repositories.

5.3.2.1. Staff will rely on reason and professional judgment in the selection of high quality supplemental materials that align to state learning standards and are appropriate for the instructional program and developmental level and interests of their students.

5.3.2.2. While supplemental materials do not require item-by-item approval of the IMC, staff are expected to thoroughly preview such materials and to give due consideration to the text complexity and developmental level of students; appropriateness of language or images; bias against racial, gender, ethnic, or other social groups; and other sensitive issues.

5.4. Temporary Supplemental Materials

Professional staff of the district will rely on reason and professional judgment in the selection of high quality temporary supplemental materials that are appropriate for the instructional program and developmental level and interests of their students.

6. PROTEST PROCEDURE

- 6.1. When a parent/guardian or employee challenges any instructional materials used or restricted from use in the schools, the following steps should be taken:
- 6.1.1. Concerns should first be discussed with the certificated teacher and/or the school principal. All parties are urged to resolve the concern at this level.
 - 6.1.2. If the concerns cannot be resolved through discussion at the school level, the following steps will be taken. The challenged instructional material will continue to be used until a decision is rendered.
 - (a) If the challenged instructional material is supplemental in nature, at a parent's written request to the principal, the supplemental material may be asked to be withdrawn from their student. The principal shall facilitate a meeting of the complainant(s) and appropriate school staff. Following the meeting, the principal shall respond with a written decision. If warranted by the scope of the supplemental material, an appeal may be submitted to the Superintendent or designee requesting review by the Instructional Materials Committee and a written decision.
 - (b) If the instructional material is core, alternative core, or intervention material, the parent/guardian or employee may register a request for reconsideration with the Superintendent or designee. This request will be forwarded to the Instructional Materials Review committee. The IMC will review the complaint and establish a timely process for public consideration of the complaint, if appropriate.
- 6.2. All instructional material reconsideration decisions will be by majority vote of the IMC and are final. Decisions of the committee will be delivered in writing to the Superintendent, complainant, and affected staff within ten (10) school business days.

Supporting Documentation

[*Washington Models for the Evaluation of Bias Content in Instructional Materials*](#)

Document History

Action:	Date:
New	January 20, 2016
Revised	