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## POLICY #2210 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Education is committed to the continuing improvement of the educational program of the district. To this end, the curriculum shall be evaluated and modified in accordance with a plan for curriculum development.

As educational leader of the district, the Superintendent shall be responsible to the Board for the development of curriculum and shall establish procedures for curriculum development that insure the effective participation of teaching staff members, pupils, the community, and members of the Board.

The Superintendent may conduct experimental programs that are not part of the duly adopted curriculum and are deemed to be necessary to the continuing growth of the instructional program; he or she shall report to the Board any such pilot program conducted, along with its objectives, evaluative criteria, and costs, before each such program is initiated.

The Superintendent shall report to the Board periodically on all progress in curriculum development.

### Principles Guiding Curriculum Planning and Renewal

The broad goal of curriculum in the Vineland Public Schools is to provide experiences for all students which will enable them to succeed and attain fulfillment in their personal and public lives. In order to achieve this goal, the development and renewal of curriculum shall be guided by the following eight principles:

A. A balanced core of common learning ensures that all students are challenged with learning experiences judged most appropriate to their future lives.

Significant elements of the core of common learning should be organized around fundamental themes addressing major issues or concerns of society and reflected in the district's Educational Goals document. A balance must exist between curriculum efforts to effect students' ability to learn and apply important skills, to promote learning from the arts and humanities. Therefore, the curriculum content must be carefully selected and closely integrated.

Because of the dramatic increase in the amount of information available, the selection of content should be guided by the belief that a challenging and in-depth study of a limited number of important topics is more effective than attempts to "cover" too many bits of disconnected information. The use of technology to facilitate learning must be integrated into the teaching and learning process across the curriculum.

B. The curriculum design focuses on results, with multiple assessments of performances closely related to the outcomes most appropriate to the future lives of students.

An effective assessment of student outcomes must be based upon multiple indicators as reflected in the Vineland Public Schools Educational Goals document. It is expected that there will be a reduction in the reliance of a single indicator, such as the standardized, or other paper and pencil, test, in assessing student outcomes. The use of multiple assessments, in addition to standardized tests, will foster the construction of meaningful knowledge and develop life-long learning skills and habits.

C. The curriculum is organized on an interdisciplinary basis to ensure deeper student understanding that results from connecting knowledge.

As issues and understandings become more complex, student learning is enhanced by integrating important information from multiple subject fields through interdisciplinary instruction. It is expected that such integration is reflected in all district curriculum development and renewal efforts.

D. The curriculum is designed to ensure that students are actively involved in the learning process and increasingly assume responsibility for their own learning.

The curriculum must provide a stimulating series of learning experiences or events that interest students and help them relate new content to previous knowledge. Students must be actively engaged in questioning, discussing and relating, all of which encourage students to form new meanings and understandings that are more useful to them.

E. Instructional materials, teaching strategies and the school's culture recognize and respect student diversity.

The value of student diversity must be clearly reflected in both symbolic and substantive ways in the instructional materials used in all classrooms. This should include attention to the contributions of all major civilizations and individuals representing a variety of ethnic groups, with emphasis given to those mirrored by the school population. Teaching strategies must accommodate various learning styles. The entire culture of the school must reflect and respect diversity.

F. The school organization avoids tracking plans that deny any student access to a substantive program of electives or general education.

To achieve our mission, the curriculum and instruction must provide opportunities and challenging experiences designed to enable all students to learn and be successful. Grouping patterns must be sensitive to the needs of students and the credible research in education. Grouping patterns which result in the credible research in education. Grouping patterns which result in the strict "tracking" of students that denies access to a substantive program of electives or general education are not appropriate.

G. Classroom strategies have a strong focus on developing thinking skills and the students construction of knowledge and meaning. Systematic emphasis shall be placed on critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and reasoning over less complex intellectual tasks, such as simple recall of factual information.

Students must be provided with opportunities to ask questions, recognize that multiple perspectives exist on many topics, observe closely, classify and compare, infer, predict and extrapolate, all of which help students "learn how to learn."

H. The implicit, or "hidden," curriculum in each school is consistent with and supportive of the written, or explicit, curriculum.

Those ideas, values, attitudes and processes that are not deliberately planned and taught have a powerful impact on students. Administrator and teacher attitudes, school and classroom rules and regulations, social interaction in the classroom and the playground, and the physical arrangement of furniture in the classroom can either reinforce or contradict the formal, written curriculum. Thus, efforts must be made to assure that the culture of the school is supportive of the intended student outcomes specified in the formal curriculum.

Adopted: 11 June 1997