

Academic Standards

The Yakima School District is committed to meeting our children's educational needs and ensuring that students reach their highest academic achievement.

The Board of Directors recognizes that content and performance standards are necessary to clarify for community, staff, parents and students what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level and in each area of study.

1. District Targets

Research based content and performance standards shall be developed by teaching and learning staff in collaboration with state and national subject area experts, and district staff. This will enable the district to meet its goal of increasing academic achievement through adhering to the following targets:

- 1.1. By 2004, all third (3rd) grade students will read with comprehension at grade level in English or Spanish as measured by a consistent district assessment and will remain at grade level or above until graduation.
- 1.2. Within three (3) years, all students will improve at least one (1) level on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in their reading, writing and communication scores.
- 1.3. By 2008 all students will pass the Certificate of Mastery graduation requirements.
- 1.4. All Yakima School District kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) students who participate in the English Language Learning (ELL) program will meet or exceed all district English as a Second Language (ESL) learning outcomes. ELL students have one (1) year to complete each ESL level. After three (3) years, all ELL students will score above the thirty-fifth (35th) percentile on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading and language, thus exiting the ELL program.

2. Board Role

The board will fulfill its primary responsibility to each student and the community by advocating for and providing adequate and equitable educational opportunities. In this process, the board is committed to adopting and maintaining a rigorous core curriculum and student performance standards designed to promote student achievement. In so doing, the board, through its policies and procedures, causes district resources of time, personnel and money to be focused on student learning, aligned according to student needs.

The board shall adopt high district standards for student achievement that meet or exceed statewide standards and challenge all students to reach their full potential. These standards shall be developed through a process that involves community, staff, parents and students. Standards shall be based on a review of state model standards and an assessment of the skills that students will need in order to be successful in the workplace and in higher education, including basic skills, problem-solving abilities and conceptual thinking. Special care shall be taken to ensure the proper articulation of standards among district schools.

Ultimate accountability for student achievement in the district rests with the board as elected representatives; however, the board also expects accountability from each student and each member of the education community. To further this accountability, the board commits to engaging and empowering parents in the formal education of their children.

3. Staff Role

The board provides support for hiring, developing, and evaluating professional staff in order to focus on staff's skills and abilities in maximizing student learning.

Staff shall continually assess students' progress toward meeting the standards and shall offer remedial assistance in accordance with board policy.

4. Program Improvement

The standards shall also provide a basis for evaluating the instructional program, making decisions about curriculum and assessment, and, as required by law, evaluating teacher performance.

5. Program Innovation

To meet the needs of each student, the board directs the district to make early identification of learning difficulties and to respond with interventions that enhance student learning. This educational environment should complement an educational process designed to nurture each child's development as a continuous learner and a contributing member of society.

While desiring district standards to be specific and comprehensive, the board does not intend that these standards be so extensive as to describe everything that will be taught in the classroom. Staff shall have sufficient time and flexibility to provide instruction that supplements the standards. Staff, under the direction of the superintendent, shall also have flexibility to determine the best instructional methods and program supports based on current, best research to use in preparing students to meet the standards.

The superintendent or designee shall ensure that district standards are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. The board directs the superintendent to prepare appropriate regulations to implement this policy.

Cross References:

(cf.: 2000 – Goals: Mission Statement; School Improvement Programs)

(cf.: 2001 – Academic Standards)

(cf.: 2002 – Assessment of Academic Standards)

(cf.: 2003 – Reading and Language Arts Instruction)
(cf.: 2012 – Equity in Education)
(cf.: 2113 – Student Learning Outcomes)
(cf.: 2115 – School to Career)
(cf.: 2120 – Curriculum Development Review and Implementation)
(cf.: 2121 – Curriculum Adoption)
(cf.: 2130 – Student Assessment Program)
(cf.: 2180 – Parent Partnerships for Student Success)
(cf.: 2310 – District-wide Instructional Materials Adoption)
(cf.: 2311 – Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials)
(cf.: 2410 – High School Graduation Requirements)
(cf.: 2420 – Grading and Program Reports)
(cf.: 2421 – Promotion)
(cf.: 4210 – School-Support Organizations)
(cf.: 4216 – Community/Business Partnerships)
(cf.: 4220 – Citizens' Advisory Committees)
(cf.: 6010 – Goals and Objectives)

Legal References:

RCW 28A.230.010-060 Compulsory Coursework and Activities
RCW 28A.320.010-510 Provisions Applicable to all Districts: District Powers
RCW 28A.320.20 Student Learning Objectives-Program Identifying and Establishing Scope
State & Local Review and Reports
RCW 28A.320.200 Program Evaluation
RCW 28A.320.210 Student Learning Objectives
RCW 28A.330.100(5) Additional Powers of Board
RCW 28A.330.100(5),(6),(9) Additional Powers of the Board
RCW 28A.405.060 Course of Study and Regulations

WAC 180-44-010 Responsibilities Related to Instruction
WAC 392-190-030 Course Offerings – Generally – Separate Sessions or Groups Permissible

Adoption Date:
020820