



Frederick County Public Schools
Board of Education
APPROVAL OF CURRICULUM AND
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Policy 500

A. Policy Purpose

To articulate the authority of the Board of Education (“Board”) in regard to matters of curriculum.

B. Definitions

1. “Community Member” is defined to mean any individual who resides in Frederick County.
2. “Course” is defined to mean an instructional experience defined for a specified time (i.e., term, semester, year) and content area that includes the essential curriculum, an approved text resource (if required), recommended hours/credits, and expected outcomes. Although course is primarily used as a term referring to secondary school offerings, this policy is also applicable to grade level content offered in elementary schools (e.g., Grade 4 math, Grade 3 ELA, Grade 2 art, etc.).
3. “Curriculum Instructional Resources” is defined as, and including, but not limited to, manuals, resource books, videos, periodicals, drama productions, websites, magazine articles.
4. “Digital Tools” is defined to mean software, online platforms, online courses, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services that are directly connected to student instruction, digital content, or digital technologies not requiring sight in an equally effective and integrated manner.
5. “Essential Curriculum” is defined as the written curriculum prepared by Frederick County Public Schools (“FCPS”) staff, reviewed by the Curriculum and Instructional Committee, and approved by the Board.
6. “Foundation Textbooks” is defined to mean the primary text resources, including corresponding student workbooks and digital texts, for teaching the essential curriculum.
7. “Materials Already in Use” is defined to mean library media materials and all materials used for instructional purposes or planning, except for textbooks under consideration.
8. “Member”, in the context of a community, is defined to mean any individual who resides in Frederick County.
9. “Parent” is defined to mean any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
 - a. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated;

- b. Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated;
 - c. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities;
 - d. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities;
 - e. Caregiver – An adult resident of Frederick County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian, as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article, §7-101(c) (Informal Kinship Care) or has been issued a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Verification of Release form entering into a custodial arrangement with the federal government; or,
 - f. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
10. “Pilot Courses” is defined as courses intended for trial implementation at a limited number of schools so that staff can review and evaluate the results, develop the essential curriculum, determine staff development needs, and finalize textbook and material selection.
11. “Supplemental Texts” is defined to mean texts that support and complement foundation textbooks.

C. Policy Statement

1. FCPS will provide a Prekindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum that promotes equity, respect, and civility among our diverse community, accurately depicts and represents the distinctive contributions of our global community, and provides opportunities for staff and students to model cultural proficiency in every school and program. FCPS will provide the necessary resources and professional development required to close achievement and opportunity gaps among all student groups and ensure equitable professional opportunities for all staff.
2. Curriculum and instructional materials will reflect cultural and racial diversity, and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups. FCPS will include cultural responsiveness in reviews of curriculum, pedagogy, instructional materials, and assessments design. All curriculum materials must be examined for racial bias as part of the curriculum review and implementation process.
3. The curriculum should enable staff to model and students to develop the following attitudes, skills, and behaviors:
 - a. value one’s heritage and the heritage of others;
 - b. respect, value, and celebrate diversity as an essential component of a healthy and thriving community;
 - c. value the richness of cultural pluralism and commonality;

- d. develop and promote inclusive relationships and work effectively in cross-cultural environments; and,
 - e. confront and eliminate stereotypes related to individuals' actual or perceived personal characteristics.
- 4. In accordance with state law, the Board makes the final approval of essential curriculum, new courses, pilot courses and textbooks, and any materials of instruction used in Family Life and Human Sexuality units within Health education. The Board will ensure that the aforementioned essential curricula and materials of instruction are available for review by teachers, administrators, parents, and any interested community member of Frederick County.
 - 5. The essential curriculum and courses of study will not be changed in substance or content without the approval of the Board. The Board recognizes the need to revise instructional programs on a periodic basis, in order to adapt to changes in the student population and community, and in order to reflect new technologies, methodology and content.
 - 6. To ensure consistent and orderly revisions to instructional programs, the Board encourages staff to evaluate proposed changes through the use of pilot programs prior to countywide implementation.

D. Implementation

- 1. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility of developing Curriculum Instructional Resources intended to assist teachers in implementing the approved essential curriculum and courses of study. The Superintendent will adopt regulations necessary to effectively direct the development and review of such instructional resources. Instructional materials shall be selected after review and evaluation by appropriate staff following the criteria for selection of instructional materials.
- 2. **Other Instructional Materials/Digital Tools**
 - a. The Board also delegates to the Superintendent the approval of other instructional materials, including, but not limited to, drama productions, using processes and criteria that ensure compliance with relevant laws and other policies and regulations.
 - b. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the regulation of the approval of digital tools. Regulation(s) should include approval procedures that include:
 - i. Adherence to relevant law, policy or regulation;
 - ii. Protection of student data privacy;
 - iii. Alignment of instructional or operational needs;
 - iv. Accessibility for all students; and,
 - v. Alignment with purchasing regulations.
- 3. **Textbooks**
 - a. The Board requires the Superintendent to outline a process and criteria in regulation for reviewing, selecting and approving textbooks. Textbooks for student use will be

- made available for public inspection and review as part of this selection and approval process.
- b. All textbooks will be approved by the Board.
4. **Curriculum, Courses and Pilot Courses.** The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a regulation(s) governing the approval of curricula and creation of courses, including pilot courses.
5. **Curriculum Instructional Resources**
- a. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility of selecting essential curriculum resources that will help support and achieve the school system's goals as well as standards and indicators outlined in the essential curriculum.
 - b. Essential curriculum resources shall be approved using processes and criteria that ensure compliance with other Board policies and regulations.
6. **Reconsideration of Materials Already in Use**
- a. The Superintendent shall develop a regulation to govern the reconsideration of materials already in use and for offering alternative materials of instruction in the classroom.
 - b. The Superintendent is authorized to adopt regulations to review material of instruction already in use if a community member of Frederick County objects to its use.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
- a. [Policy 117](#), *Anti-Racism*
 - b. [Policy 444](#), *Educational Equity and Excellence*
2. **Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)**
- a. [COMAR 13A.01.06.04](#), *Educational Equity in Maryland*
 - b. [COMAR 13A.03.04](#), *Specific Subjects*
 - c. [COMAR 13A.03.06](#), *Universal Design for Learning*
 - d. [COMAR 13A.05.02.13\(H\)](#), *Local Agency Administration*
3. **Federal Law**
- a. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 USC § 1232h
 - b. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (1998), 29 USC § 794d
4. **FCPS Regulations**
- a. [Regulation 500-01](#), *Curriculum, Courses, and Instructional Resources*
 - b. [Regulation 500-02](#), *Supplemental Instructional Periodicals*
 - c. [Regulation 500-04](#), *Textbook Review, Selection, and Approval*
 - d. [Regulation 500-08](#), *Selection and Approval of Digital Tools for the Instructional Program*
 - e. [Regulation 500-09](#), *Pilot Courses*
 - f. [Regulation 500-39](#), *Reconsideration of Instructional Materials Already in Use*

5. **Maryland Statutes**

- a. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 4-101](#)
- b. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 4-205](#)
- c. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 4-111](#)
- d. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-106](#)
- e. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-910](#)
- f. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 9-104.1](#)
- g. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 9-106](#)

F. Policy History (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation
Adoption Dates	03/11/09
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