

## ***Curriculum and Instructional Philosophy***

*"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."*

*--William Arthur Ward*

Effective educational curriculum combines structure and flexibility. The key is to find a balance so teachers may practice their craft and feel some autonomy in the classroom. Districts should prescribe specific curriculum but allow teachers to enrich and enhance it. If not, administrators may find themselves at odds with the very best teachers.

Curriculum should be results oriented with multiple types of assessments that measure success of both students and teachers. In the age of accountability, the focus of school improvement must be based on continuous student progress through vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment. In this process, teachers should have input into local standards making sure they align with state and national norms. This process is not effective without proper professional development and training that reinforces instructional strategies.

There must be a standard written, taught, and assessed curriculum for every subject in the district. The written curriculum should include curriculum guides, lesson plans, and grade records. The taught curriculum should include the essential knowledge and skills mandated by the state. Scope and sequence developed by the teachers through vertical teaming must also be a part of the taught curriculum. The assessed curriculum needs to include teacher-made tests, district benchmark assessments, and state assessments.

The curriculum must have a balanced core of learning. A foundation for challenging enrichment programs at the elementary level leading to Advanced Placement courses at the high school is important. Curriculum should be inter-disciplinary so students can make connections scaffolding their learning from one subject to another. All curricula must have a belief system by which a foundation can be built.

My beliefs:

- Relationships with students matter
- Teachers make a difference in the classroom
- Ongoing professional development leads to improved achievement
- Active learning and engagement of students is a priority
- Challenging curriculum promotes thinking skills
- School improvement is a continuous process
- All students can learn