



Smithtown Central School District

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District Position Paper

Topic: Curriculum

The Smithtown Central School District believes that the primary purpose of education is to impart the skills, knowledge, and attitudes imperative for students to function successfully in school and society. To that end, the district is committed to the development of an exemplary district-wide curriculum that promotes high expectations for its teachers and students that results in meaningful student learning. The district's curriculum is intended to promote the development of critical thinking and reasoning skills, creative problem solving abilities, and effective interpersonal communication and human relations intelligence.

Using the national, state, and/or program learning standards (AP®, Project Lead The Way, college-level, etc.) as the driving force, the curriculum outlines the specific skills that students will acquire as part of a course of study. In most cases, the curriculum is locally developed by Smithtown teachers and administrators to meet the required learning standards. In some cases, high-quality curriculum may be adopted or adapted from commercially published resources. In all cases, the purpose of the district's curriculum is to ensure that all students will learn the same core of significant content at a specific instructional level, from teacher to teacher and school to school. The curriculum is vertically aligned to reinforce and build upon the knowledge and skills learned as students move from one grade level to the next. Horizontal alignment of the curriculum at each grade level aims to provide students with an opportunity to apply skills and concepts across subjects.

The curriculum often includes both requirements and suggestions related to classroom learning activities, electronic and physical resources for teacher and/or student use, methods to assess skill acquisition and the enduring or long-term understandings that students are expected to gain as a result of their successful completion of the coursework.

The district provides teachers with required resources necessary to implement the written curriculum. Identified resources such as workbooks, textbooks, and/or electronic tools, which serve as a major source of support for teachers, students, and families as they progress through the curriculum, do not, on their own, serve as the sole decision maker on what and how students will learn. Therefore, it is important to differentiate between the curriculum and the resource(s) used to support the development of the explicit skills and objectives identified in the curriculum.

Teachers use the district curriculum and resources to develop daily lesson plans and implement effective, engaging classroom instruction to meet the needs of their students. The use of both formative and summative assessments serve as a means for identifying student mastery of skills and content and the impact of the teacher's instructional strategies. Using the information gathered from these assessments and an evaluation of students' responses to classroom instruction and activities, teachers revise and adjust their lesson plans to meet the needs of their students each and every day.

The district's curriculum and courses of study are designed to support students in completing their K-12 experience well equipped for college or the workforce and the ability to successfully thrive within the community they live.