

Standard 3 Curriculum

A quality system offers a research-based curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning that is subject to review and revision at regular intervals.

Quality System Indicators

In fulfillment of the standard, the system:

- 3.1 Develops curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning;
- 3.2 Provides a curriculum that includes a set of essential knowledge and skills in each content area;
- 3.3 Aligns curriculum with clearly defined expectations for student learning across subject areas and grade levels;
- 3.4 Ensures that the curriculum reflects a commitment to equity, an appreciation of diversity, recognition of different ways of learning, and challenges each student to excel;
- 3.5 Develops written curriculum guides and support materials that serve as a basis for implementing the curriculum;
- 3.6 Promotes in the curriculum the active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities to explore application of higher order thinking skills and to investigate new approaches in applying their learning;
- 3.7 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curriculum choices; and
- 3.8 Provides a balance of educational experiences through the curriculum that is based on knowledge of human growth and development, and relies on sound learning principles.

Abbeville County School District provides a comprehensive high quality curriculum that supports its mission to develop proficient, creative, self-motivated students by providing quality educational opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment, which supports innovations and lifelong learning.

The curriculum of Abbeville County Schools is based on the South Carolina Department of Education Standards for the following eight areas: English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Visual/Performing Arts, Foreign Language, Physical Education and Health/Safety. The state standards are correlated to national standards in each of the core content areas. Each curriculum standard is specific and clearly defines student expectations for providing direction for classroom instruction across all grade levels. Teachers at the 4k level follow the state approved "Creative_Curriculum" to address the needs of the students. To provide support and guidance to teachers and administrators the district provides curriculum guides for each grade level 5k-8th grade in the areas of Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Through these guides teachers are able to support the needs of their students by providing activities and experiences that provide opportunities to apply higher order thinking skills, address diverse learning styles, promote diversity and provide consistency throughout Abbeville County Schools.

In grades 9-12 students select from seven career clusters to guide their educational programs in addition to the state requirements for graduation. Abbeville County School District has developed the following career clusters: 1-Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, 2- Arts, Communications & Humanities, 3- Human Services, 4-Health Science, 5-Transportation, Distribution & Logistics, 6-Architecture & Construction and 7-Science, Technology & Mathematics. Within these clusters students choose from 15 majors.

Pacing Guides which are implemented throughout the District ensure that teachers have specific timelines for addressing content standards. A pacing guide for each of the four core content areas has been implemented. Teachers of 4k follow the pacing guide of "Creative Curriculum".

A main focus of Abbeville County School District is to ensure that curriculum, instruction and assessment are aligned. Data is collected from numerous sources: report cards, classroom observations by Instructional Specialists and school administration, surveys (student, parent, and teacher), computer assisted instruction (CAI) lab scores and district assessment. The assessment plan for Abbeville County School District students is comprehensive and continuous. Students in Four- Year Old Kindergarten are assessed using DIAL –R, Five-Year Old Kindergarten and First Grade are assessed using South Carolina Readiness Assessment (SCRA). Students in Grades 2-10 are assessed using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) as well as state mandated Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) administered in grades 3-8. Students in grades 10-12 are assessed using the South Carolina High School Assessment Program (HSAP) and the South Carolina End of Course Examination Program (EOCEP).

In spring of 2007, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing was implemented in a pilot program. Abbeville County Schools prior to this time did not have a researched based assessment that was correlated to the state standards. It became evident by looking at test data that a district wide assessment was needed to assist teachers in addressing areas of need for students and direct classroom instruction.

The MAP implementation proved to be successful in providing reliable data and full implementation begins in 2007-2008 school year with September 2007 and March 2008 testing events. Data from the various sources will be reviewed at the district level and by each school's data team. Data teams which are made up of the Principal, Instructional Specialist, and two teachers from the school will further analyze and use the results to make curriculum decisions for students as well as decisions concerning instructional programs.

At the district level, data such as test scores, teacher and administrator suggestions and input from Instructional Specialists at monthly meetings are used to plan professional development opportunities for teachers and

administrators. A multi-session approach is being implemented when possible. That is, teachers are given training in multiple workshops instead of the “hit it one time” approach. Also professional development addresses one or more of the following three areas within the district strategic plan which are student achievement, teacher quality and school climate.

The district is in the process of developing and implementing a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Through this model monitoring of the curriculum, screenings and early interventions will develop to ensure that all students are provided effective instruction. To insure that implementation is successful, the Instructional, Special Services and Technology Departments are working closely together.

The Gifted and Talented Program serves students across the district that have been tested and met the state requirements for the program. After reviewing data, it is apparent that this program needs more attention and direction. A part-time coordinator was put in place in 2006-2007. Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, a full-time coordinator will oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of this program. The goal is to increase the student population in Academic Gifted and Talented and build an Artistic Gifted and Talented Program in Abbeville County Schools. To date, teachers have been provided additional training to meet the future needs of the District. Data from the 2006-2007 year will be reviewed and strategies will be developed to build a high quality and successful program for our students.

As analysis of data is performed, the following are indicated for the next five year period:

- Provide opportunities at the high school level to meet the expanding academic needs of students through on-line, distant learning and/or Virtual School offerings.
- Continue building and training Data Teams to assess and make data driven decisions in all areas such as student achievement, teacher quality and school climate.
- Continue to update and monitor the curriculum, instruction and assessment alignment throughout the district.
- Continue building new career clusters at the high school level to meet the needs of all stakeholders.
- Continue integrated approach with Instructional, Technology and Special Services Departments to provide a comprehensive program.
- Build a program that addresses the needs of higher achieving students through the Gifted and Talented Program.