MODEL POLICY #16

EVALUATION AND UPDATE OF DISTRICT CURRICULUM PURCHASED FROM THIRD PARTIES

Why Adopt This Policy?

The content of curriculum being taught to students in the classroom is critical and foundational to their education. School boards should consider adopting a policy on the evaluation and update of curriculum purchased from third parties to ensure the district prioritizes student academic achievement and adapts to evolving educational needs. Such a policy prioritizes continuous improvement in teaching methods and curricular content. This policy creates a system for reviewing curriculum purchased from third parties as well as monitoring and following up on the effectiveness of that curriculum.

Policy

This policy is established to ensure that the district maintains a dynamic and effective curriculum that prioritizes student academic achievement and adapts to evolving educational needs. The policy provides a framework for the ongoing evaluation and updates of district curriculum purchased from publishers or other third-party vendors.

For purposes of this policy, third-party curriculum refers to educational materials used as part of the educational program which may include textbooks, workbooks, teacher guides, digital resources, assessment materials, and other print and non-print materials or resources which are purchased from publishers or other third-party vendors.

For kindergarten through grade 12, District curriculum shall be adopted in the subject areas of reading, language arts, math, social studies, science, health, computer literacy, environmental education, physical education, art and music. For grades 7 through 12, curriculum shall also be adopted in vocational education.

District administration shall develop a plan for monitoring curriculum continuously, and the overall program evaluation method of the district shall be reviewed at least once every five years and revised as appropriate. All selected curriculum shall ensure that students receive a high-quality education and are prepared for academic success and shall comply with all applicable requirements in federal and state law. As part of that process, this policy applies to the District's selection of third party curriculum.

In addition to establishing and monitoring overall curricula for the District, the District shall have a standing Curriculum Review Committee to evaluate and update third-party curriculum for certain core subject areas as

described below. The Curriculum Review Committee shall consist of members who shall be selected by the District Administrator and approved by the Board. The Committee shall include at least one person from each of the following groups: teachers, administrators, curriculum coordinators, parents and students. The District Administrator and Board are free to have as many members from each group as they determine in their discretion so long as there is at least one member from each group. The District Administrator shall appoint one member as the chairperson of the Committee who shall be approved by the Board. Each member and the chairperson of the Committee shall participate for a term determined by the District Administrator and Board and may be replaced by the District Administrator and Board at any time. The Curriculum Review Committee shall comply with all applicable open meetings and open records laws.

Third-Party Curriculum Review Process

The district shall implement a process for evaluating and selecting educational materials in the subjects of English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies on a rotating basis every four years. For each subject area being evaluated, the Curriculum Review Committee shall:

1. **Make a list of high-quality curricula available from third parties;**
2. **Request samples of curriculum listed, review content and data, and narrow the list to 3 to 5 options.**
3. **Conduct a detailed review of the top 3 to 5 options.**
    a. In determining the top option, the Committee shall invite vendors to present on curriculum, attend site visits, research relevant resources, and consider whether prospective curriculum has demonstrated a positive impact on student outcomes. The Committee may also organize a pilot course, gather student surveys, and seek parent input.
4. **After the Committee has selected a top option, the chairperson shall present the top option to the school board.**
    a. Approval of a new third-party curriculum shall follow applicable district policy.

Monitoring and Follow-Up

For third-party curriculum approved pursuant to this policy, the Curriculum Review Committee shall create a three-year implementation plan which must include the following:

1. **Goals for implementation of the new curriculum;**
2. **Procedure for monitoring student progress; and**
3. **Regular updates to the school board by the District Administrator.**

All selected curriculum shall ensure that students receive a high-quality education and are prepared for academic success and shall comply with all applicable requirements in federal and state law.

The district shall offer professional development to address changes in curriculum content, pedagogical approaches, and educational technology.

Each state will have its own process regarding statutory mandates for curriculum. Before adopting this policy, WILL encourages school board members to determine what those state-specific requirements are.

Legal Analysis — National

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to establish academic standards in reading, math and science. *See* 20 U.S.C. § 6301.

Legal Analysis — Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, school boards have the duty to determine the educational standards for the district and to adopt all textbooks necessary for the use in district schools. School boards also have authority to do all things reasonable to promote the cause of education, including establishing, providing and improving school district programs for the benefit of students. *See* Wis. Stats. § 118.03, 118.13, 119.18, 120.13, 121.02; *see also* Wis. Admin Pl § 8.01 and Wis. Admin. Pl § 8.01(2)(k).

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