

# **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

## **SECTION 5 OF 9**

## **SECTION 5: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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## **5:1 EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

Each school in the district, in collaboration with administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents, the community, and students, shall develop a school-level improvement plan (SLIP) to:

- Establish goals or anticipated outcomes based on an analysis of students' needs;
- Identify student supports and evidence-based interventions and practices to be implemented;
- Describe the professional learning necessary for adults to deliver the supports or interventions;
- Describe the implementation timeline for monitoring of the interventions and practices for effectiveness;
- Describe the timeline and procedures for evaluation of the interventions and practices for effectiveness; and
- Evaluate and modify a parent, family, and community engagement plan.

Each SLIP shall include a literacy plan that includes a curriculum program and a professional development program that is aligned with the schools' literacy needs and is based on the science of reading.

Some of the data that shall be considered when developing the SLIP includes, but is not limited to:

- Statewide assessment results;
- Interim assessment results;
- Similarly situated school's SLIPs; and
- Evaluation(s), including staff, student, and community feedback, of the existing SLIP.

The SLIP is to be reviewed on an ongoing basis with reports to the Board on the implementation progress of the SLIP throughout the year of implementation. By May 1 of each year, the SLIP to be implemented in the upcoming school year shall be presented to the District Board of Directors for review and approval. The District will post the District's SLIP(s) to the District's website under State-Required Information by August 1 of each year.

The District shall annually submit a District Strategic Plan (DSP) to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education by June 30 for review for the upcoming school year. The DSP shall include, without limitation:

- A literacy and mathematics plan that addresses student supports and acceleration opportunities based on student data and outcomes;
- Information regarding the prioritization and intended use of funding, including, without limitation, Enhanced Student Achievement Funding;
- The support the District will provide to the District's schools identified as in need of targeted support, comprehensive support, or both; and
- Health and wellness goals.

The District shall post the District's DSP to the District's website under State-Required Information, including any updates to the District's DSP.

The District's Board of Directors shall hold a meeting annually to provide a report that systematically explains the District's policies, programs, and goals to the community. The District's report shall detail the progress of the District and the District's schools toward accomplishing program goals, accreditation standards, and proposals to correct any deficiencies. The report shall be made available to the public, including by posting a copy on the District's website under State-Required Information no later than ten (10) days following the meeting, with the most recent annual report posted by September 1 of each year. The meeting shall provide parents and other members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions concerning the District's program.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-2914  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2919  
A.C.A. § 20-7-135  
DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act  
DESE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans and Family and Community Engagement  
DESE Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and Education Service Cooperative Websites  
Standards for Accreditation 1-B.4, 3-B.11, 3-B.2, 3-B.2.1, 5-A.1  
Commissioner's Memo COM-20-021

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Last Revised: May 20, 2025

## 5:2 PLANNING FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Each school in the district, in collaboration with administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents, the community, and students, shall develop a school-level improvement plan (SLIP) to:

- Establish goals or anticipated outcomes based on an analysis of students' needs;
- Identify student supports and evidence-based interventions and practices to be implemented;
- Describe the professional learning necessary for adults to deliver the supports or interventions;
- Describe the implementation timeline for monitoring of the interventions and practices for effectiveness;
- Describe the timeline and procedures for evaluation of the interventions and practices for effectiveness; and
- Evaluate and modify a parent, family, and community engagement plan.

Each SLIP shall include a literacy plan that includes a curriculum program and a professional development program that is aligned with the District's literacy needs and is based on the science of reading.

Some of the data that shall be considered when developing the SLIP includes, but is not limited to:

- Statewide assessment results;
- Interim assessment results;
- Similarly situated school's SLIPs; and
- Evaluation(s), including staff, student, and community feedback, of the existing SLIP.

The SLIP is to be reviewed on an ongoing basis with reports to the board on the implementation progress of the SLIP throughout the year of implementation. By May 1 of each year, the SLIP to be implemented in the upcoming school year shall be presented to the District Board of Directors for review and approval. The District will post the District's SLIP(s) to the District's website under State-Required Information by August 1 of each year.

The district shall develop, with appropriate staff; school board members; and community input, a school district support plan (SDSP). The SDSP, in coordination with the District's SLIPs, shall:

- Specify the support the District will provide to the District's schools;
  - Collaboratively establish priorities regarding goals or anticipated outcomes with the District's schools, including feeder schools;
  - Identify resources to support the established priorities;
  - Describe the time and pace of providing support and monitoring for the established priorities;
  - Describe the measures for analyzing and evaluating that the District support was effective in improving the school performance;
  - Establish, evaluate, and update a parent, family, and community engagement plan;<sup>1</sup>
- and

- Direct the use of Enhanced Student Achievement funding for strategies to close gaps in academic achievement.

If the District's data reflects a disproportionality in equitable access to qualified and effective teachers and administrators, the District shall develop and implement strategies to provide equitable access as part of the SDSP.

If forty percent (40%) or more of the District's students scored "in need of support" on the prior year's statewide assessment for reading, the District shall develop a literacy plan as part of the SDSP that includes:

- Goals for improving reading achievement throughout the District; and
- Information regarding the prioritization of funding, including without limitation, Enhanced Student Achievement funding, for strategies to improve reading achievement throughout the District.

The District shall post the District's SDSP to the District's website under State-Required Information, including any updates to the District's SDSP.

The District's Board of Directors shall hold a meeting annually to provide a report that systematically explains the District's policies, programs, and goals to the community. The District's report shall detail the progress of the District and the District's schools toward accomplishing program goals, accreditation standards, and proposals to correct any deficiencies. The report shall be made available to the public, including by posting a copy on the District's website under State-Required Information no later than ten (10) days following the meeting, with the most recent annual report posted by September 1 of each year. The meeting shall provide parents and other members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions concerning the District's program.

Legal References:

A.C.A. § 6-15-2914  
DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and  
Accountability Act  
DESE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans and Family and  
Community Engagement  
Standards for Accreditation 1-B.4, 3-B.1, 3-B.2, 3-B.2.1, 5-A.1  
Commissioner's Memo COM-20-021

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## 5:3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Sequential curricula should be developed for each subject area. Curricula should be aligned with the Frameworks and standards established by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and in harmony with the District's vision, mission, goals, and educational philosophy. Student achievement is increased through an integrated curriculum that promotes continuity and a growth in skills and knowledge from grade to grade and from school to school. Therefore, the Board desires that unnecessary duplication of work among the various grades and schools be eliminated and that courses of study and their corresponding content guides be coordinated effectively.

The Board of Education is responsible for reviewing and approving all instructional programs offered by the District as well as approving significant changes to courses or course materials before they are implemented. The Superintendent is responsible for making curriculum recommendations.

A curriculum review cycle should be established to address the continued relevancy, adequacy, and cost effectiveness of individual courses and instructional programs. Each school's administration shall implement a monitoring process to ensure that the instructional content of each course offered is consistent with the content standards and curriculum frameworks approved by the State Board of Education.

The District shall not purchase curriculum for the District's reading program that is not from the list of curricula approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

No curriculum or classroom instruction shall be provided on the following topics before grade five (5):

- Sexually explicit materials;
- Sexual reproduction;
- Sexual intercourse;
- Gender identity; or
- Sexual orientation.

Legal References:       Standards for Accreditation 1-A.1, 1-A.4  
                              A.C.A. § 6-15-1505(a)  
                              A.C.A. § 6-15-2906  
                              A.C.A. § 6-16-157  
                              A.C.A. § 6-17-429

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## 5:4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

For the purposes of this policy, professional development (PD) means a set of coordinated, planned learning activities for District employees who are required to hold a current license issued by the State Board of Education as a condition of employment<sup>1</sup> that:

- Is required by statute or the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); or
- Meets the following criteria:
  - Improves the knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of teachers;
  - Improves the knowledge and skills of administrators and paraprofessionals concerning effective instructional strategies and methods;
  - Leads to improved student academic achievement; and
  - Is researched-based and standards-based.

All employees shall attend all local PD training sessions as directed by his/her supervisor.

As part of the District's School District Support Plan (SDSP), the District shall develop and implement a professional development plan (PDP) for its licensed employees. The District's PDP shall, in part, align District resources to address the PD activities identified in each school's school-level improvement plan (SLIP) and incorporate the licensed employee's professional growth plan (PGP). The PDP shall describe how the District's categorical funds will be used to address deficiencies in student performance and any identified academic achievement gaps between groups of students. At the end of each school year, the District shall evaluate the PD activities' effectiveness at improving student performance and closing achievement gaps.

Each licensed employee shall receive a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours of PD annually to be fulfilled between July 1 and June 30.<sup>2</sup> A licensed employee may be required to receive more PD than the minimum when necessary to complete the licensed employee's PGP.<sup>3</sup> All licensed employees are required to obtain thirty-six (36) hours of approved PD each year over a five-year period as part of their licensure renewal requirements. PD hours earned in excess of each licensed employee's required number of hours in the designated year cannot be carried over to the next year.

Licensed employees who are prevented from obtaining the required PD hours due to their illness or the illness of an immediate family member as defined in A.C.A. § 6-17-1202 have until the end of the following school year to make up the deficient hours. Missed hours of PD shall be made up with PD that is substantially similar to that which was missed and can be obtained by any method, online or otherwise, approved by DESE. This time extension does not absolve the employee from also obtaining the following year's required hours of PD. Failure to obtain required PD or to make up missed PD could lead to disciplinary consequences, up to termination or nonrenewal of the contract of employment.

The goal of all PD activities shall be improved teaching and learning knowledge and skills that result in individual, team, school-wide, and District-wide improvement designed to ensure that all students demonstrate proficiency on the state's academic standards. The PDP

shall be research-based and standards-based and in alignment with applicable DESE Rules and/or Arkansas code.

Teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals shall be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the plan for their own PD offerings. The results of the evaluation made by the participants in each program shall be used to continuously improve PD offerings and to revise the SLIP.

Flexible PD hours (flex hours) are those hours that an employee is allowed to substitute PD activities, different than those offered by the District, but are still aligned to the employee's PGP or the employee's school's SLIP, or the District's PDP. The District shall determine on an annual basis how many, if any, flex hours of PD it will allow to be substituted for District scheduled PD offerings. The determination may be made at an individual building, a grade, or by subject basis. The District administration and the building principal have the authority to require attendance at specific PD activities. Employees must receive advance approval from the building principal for activities they wish to have qualify for flex PD hours. To the fullest extent possible, PD activities are to be scheduled and attended such that teachers do not miss their regular teaching assignments. Six (6) approved flex hours credited toward fulfilling the licensed employee's required hours shall equal one (1) contract day. Hours of PD earned by an employee that are in excess of the employee's required hours, but are either not at the request of the District or not pre-approved by the building principal, shall not be credited toward fulfilling the required number of contract days for that employee.<sup>4</sup> Hours earned that count toward the licensed employee's required hours also count toward the required number of contract days for that employee. Employees shall be paid their daily rate of pay for PD hours earned at the request of the District that necessitate the employee work more than the number of days required by their contract.<sup>5</sup>

Teachers and administrators who, for any reason, miss part or all of any scheduled PD activity they were required to attend, must make up the required hours in comparable activities, which are to be pre-approved by the employee's appropriate supervisor.

To receive credit for his/her PD activity, each employee is responsible for obtaining and submitting documents of attendance, or completion for each PD activity he/she attends. Documentation is to be submitted to the building principal or designee. The District shall maintain all documents submitted by its employees that reflect completion of PD programs, whether such programs were provided by the District or an outside organization.

To the extent required by DESE Rules, employees will receive up to six (6) hours of educational technology PD that is integrated within other PD offerings, including taking or teaching an online or blended course.

The following PD shall count toward a licensed employee's required PD hours to the extent the District's PDP or the employee's school's SLIP includes such training, is approved for flex hours, or is part of the employee's PGP and it provides him/her with knowledge and skills for teaching:

- Students with intellectual disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder;

- Students with specific learning disorders, including dyslexia;
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students;
- Gifted students.

Beginning in the 2013-14 school-year and every fourth year thereafter, all District personnel shall receive two (2) hours of PD related to child maltreatment required under A.C.A. § 6-61-133.

Beginning in school-year 2014-15 and every fourth year thereafter, teachers shall receive two (2) hours of PD designed to enhance their understanding of effective parent and family engagement strategies.

Beginning in school-year 2014-15 and every fourth year thereafter, administrators shall receive two (2) hours of PD designed to enhance their understanding of effective parent and family engagement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parent and family participation.

Beginning in the 2016-17 school-year and every fourth year thereafter, teachers who provide instruction in Arkansas history shall receive at least two (2) hours of PD in Arkansas history as part of the teacher's annual PD requirement.

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, the District shall provide professional development to teachers licensed:

- At the elementary level for kindergarten through grade six (K-6), in special education for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), or reading specialists for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to obtaining a proficiency credential in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction; and
- In an area other than elementary level for kindergarten through grade six (K-6), in special education for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), or reading specialists for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to obtaining an awareness credential in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction.

The professional development will be designed so that, by the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, all teachers employed in a teaching position that requires an elementary education license (K-6) or special education license, or reading specialists in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) shall demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and practices of scientific reading instruction and all other teachers shall demonstrate awareness in knowledge and practices of the scientific reading instruction.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the District shall provide annual training instruction based on the science of reading as set forth in the literacy plan contained within the District's SLIPs.

Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year and every fourth year thereafter, all licensed personnel shall receive two (2) hours of training related to bullying prevention and recognition of the relationship between incidents of bullying and the risk of suicide.

Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year and every fourth year thereafter, all licensed personnel shall receive two (2) hours of PD in mental health awareness and teen suicide awareness and prevention, which may be obtained by self-review of suitable mental health awareness and suicide prevention material approved by DESE.

By the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year and every fourth year thereafter, a school counselor shall receive Youth Mental Health First Aid training to learn the risk factors and warning signs of mental health issues in adolescents; the importance of early intervention; and how to help an adolescent who is in crisis or expecting a mental health challenge.

Anticipated rescuers shall receive training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators as required by DESE Rule. Such training shall count toward the required annual hours of PD.

At least once every three (3) years, persons employed as athletic coaches shall receive training related to the recognition and management of concussions, dehydration, or other health emergencies; students' health and safety issues related to environmental issues; communicable diseases, and sudden cardiac arrest. The training may include a component on best practices for a coach to educate parents of students involved in athletics on sports safety.

All licensed personnel shall receive training related to compliance with the District's antibullying policies and the licensed employee's duties under the District's antibullying policies.

For each administrator, the thirty-six (36) hour PD requirement shall include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership, and fiscal management. This training may include the Initial, Tier 1, and Tier 2 training required for Superintendents and other designees by DESE's Rules Governing the Arkansas Financial Accounting and Reporting System and Annual Training Requirements.

Building level administrators shall complete the credentialing assessment for the teacher evaluation PD program prior to conducting any summative teacher evaluations.<sup>6</sup>

Teachers' PD shall meet the requirements prescribed under the Teacher Evaluation and Support System (TESS).

By the end of the 2014-15 school-year, teachers shall have received professional awareness on the characteristics of dyslexia and the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia.<sup>7</sup>

Teachers required by the superintendent, building principal, or their designee to take approved training related to teaching an advance placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service shall receive up to thirty (30) hours of credit toward the hours of PD required annually.

Licensed personnel may earn up to twelve (12) hours of PD for time they are required to spend in their instructional classroom, office or media center prior to the first day of student/teacher interaction **provided** the time is spent in accordance with state law and current DESE rules that deal with PD. Licensed personnel who meet the requirements of this paragraph, the associated statute, and DESE Rules shall be entitled to one (1) hour of PD for each hour of approved preparation.

Licensed personnel shall receive five (5) PD hours for each credit hour of a graduate level college course that meets the criteria identified in law and applicable DESE rules. A maximum of fifteen (15) such hours may be applied toward the thirty-six (36) hours of PD required annually for license renewal.<sup>8</sup>

The District shall make available annually to licensed personnel at least thirty (30) minutes of professional development on recognizing the warning signs that a child is a victim of human trafficking and reporting a suspicion that a child is a victim of human trafficking.

In addition to other required PD, personnel of Alternative Learning Environments shall receive PD on classroom management and on the specific needs and characteristics of students in alternative education environments.

District administrators as well as licensed personnel selected by the superintendent or building principal shall receive training on the appropriate use of restraint and seclusion in accordance with DESE's Advisory Guidelines for the Use of Student Restraints in Public School or Educational Settings and is in compliance with the requirements of A.C.A. § 6-18-2309. The names of District staff who have received certified training on the use of physical restraint shall be provided to all District staff at least annually.

As part of the District's implementation of the District's positive behavioral support system, District administrators as well as building personnel selected by the superintendent or building principal shall receive training in the use of positive behavior support for student behavior and in preventative techniques for teaching and motivating prosocial student behavior and conflict de-escalation and resolution techniques to be employed by school personnel to prevent, defuse, evaluate, and debrief a crisis and conflict situation.

Employees who do not receive or furnish documentation of the required annual PD jeopardize the accreditation of their school and academic achievement of their students. Failure of an employee to receive his/her required annual hours of PD in any given year, unless due to illness as permitted by law, DESE Rule, and this policy, shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Approved PD activities may include:

- Conferences/workshops/institutes;
- Mentoring/peer coaching;
- Study groups/learning teams;
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification;
- Distance and online learning (including Arkansas IDEAS);

- Micro-credentialing approved by DESE;
- Internships;
- State/district/school programs;
- Approved college/university course work;
- Action research; and
- Individually guided (to be noted in the employee's PGP).

Approved PD activities that occur during the instructional day or outside the licensed employee's annual contract days may apply toward the annual minimum PD requirement.

PD activities shall relate to the following areas:

- Content (K-12);
- Instructional strategies;
- Assessment/data-driven decision making;
- Advocacy/leadership/fiscal management;
- Systemic change process;
- Standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment;
- Supervision;
- Mentoring/peer coaching;
- Next generation learning/integrated technology;
- Principles of learning/developmental stages/diverse learners;
- Cognitive research;
- Parent and family engagement/academic planning and scholarship;
- Building a collaborative learning community;
- Student health and wellness; and
- The Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators.
- Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (Arkansas RISE)

Additional activities eligible for PD credit, as included in the PDP and licensed employee's PGP, include:

- School Fire Marshall program (A.C.A. § 6-10-110);
- Tornado safety drills (A.C.A. § 6-10-121);
- Statewide student assessments (A.C.A. § 6-15-2912);
- Test security and confidentiality (A.C.A. § 6-15-2907);
- Emergency plans and the emergency communication method with law enforcement (A.C.A. § 6-15-1302);
- TESS (A.C.A. § 6-17-2806);
- Student discipline training, behavioral intervention, and classroom management (A.C.A. § 6-18-502);
- Comprehensive School Counseling Program (A.C.A. § 6-18-1004);
- Training required by DESE under The Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act and fiscal and facilities distress statutes and rules; and
- Annual lockdown drills (6-15-1303).<sup>9</sup>

Cross References: Policy 3.50 – ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATOR CERTIFICATION

Policy 4.37 – EMERGENCY DRILLS

Policy 4.60 – STUDENT BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT

Policy 5.2 – PLANNING FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Legal References: Arkansas State Board of Education: Standards of Accreditation  
15.04

DESE Rules Governing Professional Development

DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Financial Accounting and Reporting System  
and Annual Training Requirements

DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding

DESE Advisory Guidelines for the Use of Student Restraints in Public School or  
Educational Settings

A.C.A. § 6-10-121

A.C.A. § 6-10-122

A.C.A. § 6-10-123

A.C.A. § 6-15-1004(c)

A.C.A. § 6-15-1302

A.C.A. § 6-15-1303

A.C.A. § 6-15-1703

A.C.A. § 6-15-2907

A.C.A. § 6-15-2911

A.C.A. § 6-15-2912

A.C.A. § 6-15-2913

A.C.A. § 6-15-2914

A.C.A. § 6-15-2916

A.C.A. § 6-16-1203

A.C.A. § 6-61-133

A.C.A. § 6-17-429

A.C.A. § 6-17-703

A.C.A. § 6-17-704

A.C.A. § 6-17-707

A.C.A. § 6-17-708

A.C.A. § 6-17-709

A.C.A. § 6-17-710

A.C.A. § 6-17-2806

A.C.A. § 6-17-2808

A.C.A. § 6-18-502(f)

A.C.A. § 6-18-514(g)

A.C.A. § 6-18-708

A.C.A. § 6-20-2204

A.C.A. § 6-18-2304

A.C.A. § 6-18-2308

A.C.A. § 6-18-2309

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## **5:5 SELECTION/INSPECTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

### Definitions

"Curriculum" means: the sequences of public school student learning expectations, pacing, materials, and resources that are used to teach the Arkansas academic standards and the processes for evaluating mastery of the Arkansas academic standards at particular points in time throughout the kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) educational program.

"Gender identity" means the same as is used in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, which defines it as a category of social identity and refers to an individual's identification as male, female, or, occasionally, some category other than male or female.

"Instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a public school student, regardless of its format, that includes without limitation printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital format, such as materials accessible through the internet; however, instructional material does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived orientation as heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual.

The use of instructional materials, including classroom events or activities associated with classroom instruction, beyond those approved as part of the curriculum/textbook program must be compatible with school and district policies. If there is uncertainty concerning the appropriateness of supplemental materials, the personnel desiring to use the materials shall get approval from the school's principal prior to putting the materials into use.

All instructional materials, including classroom events or activities associated with classroom instruction, used as part of the educational curriculum of a student shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of the student.

Parents or guardians wishing to inspect instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum for their child may schedule an appointment with the student's teacher at a mutually

agreeable time. Parents/guardians wishing to challenge the appropriateness of any instructional materials shall follow the procedures outlined in Policy 5.6 – CHALLENGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS.

In addition to all other inspection rights under this policy, the following shall be made available for inspection regardless of whether any of the listed items are offered as part of a sex education class or program or as part of any other class, activity, or program:

- a. Curricula;
- b. Materials;
- c. Tests;
- d. Surveys;
- e. Questionnaires
- f. Activities; and
- g. Instruction of any kind.

Except when directly related to a requirement under the Arkansas academic standards; a District employee responding to questions posed by students during class regarding sex education, sexual orientation, or gender identity as it relates to a topic of instruction; or a District employee refers to the sexual orientation or gender identity of a historical person, group, or public figure when such information provides necessary context in relation to a topic of instruction, the District shall provide written notification to parents and legal guardians of their ability to exercise their rights under this policy to review items A-G above or to challenge and/or opt their student out of items under A-G above as permitted under Policy 5.6. The District's notification method shall ensure the District receives a confirmation of the written notification receipt from parents and legal guardians.

The same notification requirements and opt out options as above for gender identity and sexual orientation shall apply to the sexual abuse and assault and human trafficking prevention education the District provides to students.

The rights provided to parents under this policy transfer to the student when he/she turns eighteen (18) years old.

Cross Reference: 5.6 – CHALLENGE TO INSTRUCTIONAL/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Legal Reference: 20 USC § 1232h  
A.C.A. § 6-16-155  
A.C.A. § 6-16-157  
A.C.A. § 6-16-1006

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## **5:6 CHALLENGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

Instructional and supplemental materials, including classroom events or activities associated with classroom instruction, are selected for their compatibility with the district's educational program and their ability to help fulfill the district's educational goals and objectives. Individuals wishing to challenge or express concerns about instructional or supplemental materials, including classroom events or activities associated with classroom instruction, may do so by following the procedure outlined below:

### **A. PRELIMINARY RECONSIDERATION PROCESS**

1. When an individual expresses concern about materials within the district's curriculum, the complainant shall first be referred to a teacher within the department that assigned the reading selection. The teacher will then notify the building principal.
2. A conference will be scheduled with the complainant. The building principal and/or teacher shall explain to the complainant the school's curriculum selection procedure. A teacher from the school where the complaint was filed shall explain to both the principal and complainant the questioned material's usefulness in the educational program, or refer the complainant to someone who can identify and explain the use of the material.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the explanation, the school principal and/or teacher shall disclose the alternate curriculum options, allowing for an alternate instructional material(s) to be read. If the complainant rejects the offer of an alternate instructional material, then they will be referred to the curriculum department which will schedule a formal meeting to discuss alternate instructional material options with the complainant.
4. If, after the conference with the curriculum specialist, the complainant wishes to make a formal challenge to have the instructional material(s) removed from the curriculum, then(s) the complainant will be supplied with a "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials" form available in the school's office. This form will be submitted to the building principal no later than sixty days (60) prior to the onset of the use of the instructional material.
5. The complainant must return the form to the building principal within five (5) calendar days of its receipt, or the matter will be considered resolved.

### **B. INITIAL RECONSIDERATION PROCESS**

1. Preliminary Procedures
  - a. The complainant shall only request reconsideration of one title at a time and at one school at a time. No additional reconsideration request will be honored until resolution of the current challenge.

b. If the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form is completed, signed, and returned within the required time frame by the complainant, the reevaluation process will commence.

c. Upon receipt of the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form, the principal will inform the superintendent of the formal complaint.

d. The Request for Initial Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form shall be referred to an Initial Reconsideration Committee at the school level. The principal appoints committee members. The Committee shall be composed of a building administrator, two teachers (both representing the grade utilizing the challenged material), two parents/community members, and a library media specialist. The parents will be chosen from the Curriculum Advisory Board, and cannot contain the initial complainant. This board will be chosen by the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent at the start of each school year. The teacher must be employed at another school within the district—not a teacher at the school where the complaint is lodged.

e. The Initial Reconsideration committee must be formed within three (3) school days from the date of receipt of the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form. Copies of the challenged material and reviews of the work will be distributed to the committee members by the third day.

## 2. Procedures for Reconsideration

a. An Initial Reconsideration Committee meeting shall take place within fifteen (15) school days of the receipt of the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form.

b. The teacher at the school where the complainant originates will be responsible for getting and disseminating review information and copies of the book/material to the Reconsideration Committee.

c. The Initial Reconsideration Committee shall examine the whole of the challenged material based on its merit and appropriateness for the intended educational use.

d. The complainant shall be allowed to privately address the Principal before the reconsideration committee convenes.

## 3. Resolution

a. The selection procedure for curriculum materials, professional reviews of the material, and the material's intended educational purpose shall be the measures for evaluating challenged material.

b. A written report of the Committee's finding will be archived with the principal and teacher, and copies forwarded to the Superintendent.

c. The Superintendent shall create a file of his/her response along with a copy of the principal's response and a copy of the contesting individual's "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials" form.

d. The principal shall notify the complainant in writing of the Committee's decision. The complainant may request a discussion with the building Principal about the written report.

e. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Initial Reconsideration Committee, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing within three (3) school days to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will arrange a meeting between the complainant and the Superintendent.

## B. SECONDARY RECONSIDERATION PROCESS

### 1. Preliminary Procedures

a. If the contesting individual is not satisfied with the Initial Reconsideration Committee's response, the individual may, within the three (3) working day period, request a meeting with the Superintendent where the individual shall present the same form previously presented to the principal along with their written request for an appeal.

b. The Superintendent shall explain to the contesting individual the criteria used for the selection of the material and its relevancy to the educational program as well as any other pertinent information in support of the use of the material.

c. Upon the completion of the meeting, if the complainant is not satisfied with the initial committee's decision or the explanation of curriculum procedure by the Superintendent, then a Subsequent Reconsideration Committee shall be convened to review the instructional material.

d. The Request for Initial Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials Form shall be referred to the Subsequent Reconsideration Committee at the district level. The Superintendent shall appoint committee members. The Committee shall be composed of a principal, two teachers from the grade level and content in which the instructional material is taught, two parents/community members, a library media specialist, and a district curriculum leader. The parents/community members will be chosen from the Curriculum Advisory Board and cannot contain the initial complainant or a member of the initial complainant's family. This board will be chosen by the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent at the start of each school year. The teacher must be employed at another school within the district—not a teacher at the school where the complaint is lodged.

e. The Subsequent Reconsideration committee must be formed within three school days from the official meeting with the Superintendent. Copies of the challenged title and reviews of the work will be distributed by a teacher to the committee members by the third day.

### 2. Subsequent Procedures for Reconsideration

- a. A Subsequent Reconsideration Committee meeting will take place within 15 calendar days of the official meeting.
- b. The teacher at the school where the complainant originates will be responsible for getting and disseminating review information and copies of the book/material to the Reconsideration Committee.
- c. The Subsequent Reconsideration Committee shall examine the whole of the challenged material based on its merit and appropriateness for the intended educational use.
- d. All members of the Subsequent Reconsideration Committee will have an equal voice in the consideration of the instructional material.

### 3. Resolution

- a. The selection procedure for curriculum materials, professional reviews of the material, and the material's intended educational purpose shall be the measures for evaluating challenged material.
- b. A written report of the Committee's finding will be archived with the Superintendent, the principal, and the teacher.
- c. The Superintendent shall notify the complainant in writing of the Committee's decision.
- c. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Subsequent Reconsideration Committee, (s)he may appeal the decision in writing within 72 hours of notification to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will arrange a meeting between the complainant and the Superintendent.
- d. If, after meeting with the Superintendent, the contesting individual is not satisfied with the Superintendent's response regarding the appropriateness of the instructional or supplemental material, he/she may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Education.
- e. The Superintendent shall present the contesting individual's "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Supplemental Materials" form along with reports from the Initial and Subsequent committees to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting along with the written responses to the challenge. The Board may elect, if it so chooses, to hear brief verbal presentations from the parties involved in the challenge. The Board shall decide at that meeting or their next regularly scheduled meeting whether to retain the material, limit the availability of the material, or remove the material from the school.
- f. The Board's primary consideration in reaching its decision shall be if the instructional and supplemental materials, including classroom events or activities associated with classroom instruction, are:
  - a. Misleading;
  - b. Factually inaccurate; or

- c. Otherwise inappropriate for the intended educational use.
- g. The Superintendent is responsible for monitoring the Reconsideration Process to ensure that the district's policy is followed.

In addition to the notification requirements under Policy 5.5 and all other challenge rights under this policy, parents and legal guardians may opt their students out of any of the following by submission of form 5.6F2 regardless of whether any of the listed items are offered as part of a sex education class or program or as part of any other class, activity, or program except when the item is directly related to a requirement under the Arkansas academic standards; a District employee is responding to questions posed by students during class regarding sex education, sexual orientation, or gender identity as it relates to a topic of instruction; or a District employee refers to the sexual orientation or gender identity of a historical person, group, or public figure when such information provides necessary context in relation to a topic of instruction:

- a. Curricula;
- b. Materials;
- c. Tests;
- d. Surveys;
- e. Questionnaires;
- f. Activities; and
- g. Instruction of any kind.

Students who are excused under this policy from participating in any or all portions of items A-G above shall not be penalized for grading purposes if the student satisfactorily performs alternative lessons related to health.

The same notification requirements and opt out options as above for gender identity and sexual orientation shall apply to the sexual abuse and assault and human trafficking prevention education the District provides to students.

The rights provided to parents under this policy transfer to the student when the student turns eighteen (18) years old.

Legal References: 20 USC 1232h  
A.C.A. § 6-16-155  
A.C.A. § 6-16-157  
A.C.A. § 6-16-1006

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: June 20, 2023

## CHALLENGE OF INSTRUCTION/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Attach extra pages if needed to complete statements.

Author, composer, producer, artists, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher & Copyright Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Patron represents

\_\_\_\_ Self

\_\_\_\_ Group/Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, please do not proceed till you have read the entire work.

2. Have you discussed this work with the teacher who used it? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What do you understand to be the general purpose for including this work in the classroom instruction?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did the general purpose for the use of this work, as described by the teacher, seem a suitable one to you? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. To what in the work do you object? Please be specific and cite exact parts.

\_\_\_\_\_

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6. What is the context of the objectionable material?

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7. What reviews have you read about this work?

---

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8. Would you like to be provided with copies of reviews?

---

9. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this work?

---

---

10. What would you like for the school to do about this work?

\_\_\_\_\_ Remove the material from the curriculum

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify):

---

11. Please recommend another work or works that would convey as valuable or more valuable a picture or perspective of the subject treated.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of Patron

---

Date

**5.6F2—STUDENT OPT OUT OF INSTRUCTION, EVENT, OR ACTIVITY REGARDING SEX ED, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT, OR HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Parent’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the list of curricula, materials, tests, surveys, questionnaires, activities, and instruction of any kind regarding sex ed, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual abuse and assault or human trafficking and wish for my student to be excused from the following regarding sex ed, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking:

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I understand that I may not opt my student out of curricula, materials, tests, surveys, questionnaires, activities, and instruction of any kind related to sex ed, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking if the curriculum, material, test, survey, questionnaire, activity, or instruction of any kind is directly related to a requirement under the Arkansas academic standards; a District employee responding to questions posed by students during class regarding sex education, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual abuse and assault, or human trafficking as it relates to a topic of instruction; or a District employee refers to the sexual orientation or gender identity of a historical person, group, or public figure when such information provides necessary context in relation to a topic of instruction.

I understand that in order for my excused student to not be penalized for grading purposes due to my student being excused from the above instruction, instructional materials, events, or activities that my student must satisfactorily perform alternative lessons related to health.

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Adopted: June 21, 2022

Last Revised: June 20, 2023

## **5:7 SELECTION OF LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS**

The purpose of the schools' libraries/media centers is to supplement and enrich the curriculum and instruction offered by the District. To promote the dialogue characteristic of a healthy democracy necessitates the maintenance of a broad range of materials and information representing varied points of view on current and historical issues.

In the selection of the materials and resources to be available in each library/media center consideration will be given to their age appropriateness. Materials should be available to challenge the different interests, learning styles, and reading levels of the school's students and that will help them attain the District's educational goals.

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. School library media professionals assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media professionals work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media professionals cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources appropriate to the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources which support the curriculum and are consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school district. Resources in school library media collections represent diverse points of view on current as well as historical issues.

The school board adopts policies within Arkansas law that guarantee students' access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media professionals implement district policies and procedures in the school.

### **Kindergarten Through Grade Five (K-5) Libraries**

The library media center located in a District elementary school that serves students in kindergarten through grade five (K-5) shall store non-age-appropriate sexual content, including without limitation a book or other resource that is located in the library media center that is available to the public, in a locked compartment.

For purposes of this policy, "non-age-appropriate sexual content" means any materials that include explicit instruction, promotion, or advocacy of sexual ideology, behaviors, or orientations that are not developmentally appropriate for kindergarten through grade five (K-5) students.

A student enrolled in the school shall not view or check out a book or other resource that concerns non-age-appropriate sexual content without the prior written approval from the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student.

District staff who are found to have knowingly violated the provisions of this section of the policy shall be disciplined in accordance with A.C.A. 6-25-107.

Additional policy guidance can be found in policy 6.14.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-25-101 et seq.

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: May 20, 2025

## **5:8 USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS**

The Board of Education encourages the enrichment of the instructional program through the proper use of supplementary materials. To help ensure the appropriate use of copyrighted materials, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, will provide district personnel with information regarding the “fair use” doctrine of the U.S. Copyright Code as detailed in the “Agreement on Guidelines for Classroom Copying in Not-for-Profit Educational Institutions with Respect to Books and Periodicals” and “Guidelines for Educational Uses of Music.”

The District will not be responsible for any employee violations of the use of copyrighted materials.

Legal Reference: 17 USCS § 101 to 1010 Federal Copyright Law of 1976

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised:

## **5:9 COMPUTER SOFTWARE COPYRIGHT**

The District shall observe copyright laws governing computer software reproduction. Unless specifically allowed by the software purchase agreement, the Copyright Act allows the purchaser of software to:

1. Make one copy of software for archival purposes in case the original is destroyed or damaged through mechanical failure of a computer. However, if the original is sold or given away, the archival copy must be destroyed;
2. Make necessary adaptations to use the program and/or;
3. Add features to the program for specific applications. These improvements may not be sold or given away without the copyright owner's permission.

The District shall abide by applicable licensing agreements before using computer software on local-area or wide-area networks.

Legal Reference: 17 USC § 117

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised:

## **5:10 RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS**

The First Amendment of the Constitution states, “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” As the Supreme Court has stated (*Abington School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203) the Amendment thus, “embraces two concepts—freedom to believe and freedom to act. The first is absolute but, in the nature of things, the second cannot be.” Therefore, it is the Board’s policy that the school system, as an agency of the government, shall be neutral in matters regarding religion and will not engage in any activity that either advocates or disparages religion. The District shall assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student.

The need for neutrality does not diminish our school system’s educational responsibility to address the historical role of religion in the development of our culture. Since we live in a diverse society, the District’s goal shall be to address the subject of religion objectively in such a way that it promotes an understanding of, and tolerance for, each other’s religious or non-religious views.

Discussions concerning religious concepts, practices, or disciplines are permissible when presented in a secular context in their relation to an inclusive study of religion or to the study of a particular region or country. The discussions shall be so that they are objective and academically informational and do not advocate any particular form of religious practice.

Instructional activities in the schools that are contrary to a pupil’s religious beliefs or teachings shall be optional.

The teacher in charge of each classroom may, at the opening of school each day, conduct a brief period of silence with the participation of all students in the classroom who desire to participate.

Students and employees may engage in personal religious practices, such as prayer, at any time, and shall do so in a manner and at a time so that the educational process is not disrupted.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-10-115

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised:

## **5:11 STUDENT PROMOTION / RETENTION**

A disservice is done to students through social promotion and is prohibited by state law. The District shall, at a minimum, evaluate each student annually in an effort to help each student who is not performing at grade level. Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons acting in loco parentis shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice of a student's possible retention or required retaking of a course shall be included with the student's grades sent home to each parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older.

Promotion or retention of students, in grades K-6, or their required retaking of a course shall be primarily based on the following criteria: (1) demonstration of mastery of grade-level standards; (2) successful attainment of a student's IEP if applicable; and (3) the student's ability to succeed in the next grade.

For each student who does not meet the reading standard established by the state board by the end of third (3<sup>rd</sup>) grade, including students who are promoted to the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) grade under a good cause waiver, the District, shall will follow Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Arkansas State Board of Education in regards to Promotion/Retention.

Promotion or retention of students, in grades 7-12, or their required retaking of a course shall be primarily based on the following criteria: (1) making a passing grade for the semester; (2) successful attainment of a student's IEP if applicable; and (3) the student's ability to succeed in the next grade.

If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student or his/her required retaking of a course, a conference shall be held before a final decision is made that includes the following individuals:

- a. The building principal or designee;
- b. The student's teacher(s);
- c. School counselor;
- d. A 504/special education representative (if applicable); and
- e. The student's parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis.

The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement or receipt of course credit, the final decision shall rest with the principal or the principal's designee.

Cross References: 3.30 – PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION  
4.45 – SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION  
REQUIREMENTS

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-2001  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2005  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2006  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2907  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2911  
A.C.A. § 6-17-429  
A.C.A. § 6-17-431  
A.C.A. § 9-28-205  
DESE Rules Governing Grading and Course Credit  
Murphy v. State of Ark., 852 F.2d 1039 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1988)

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: June 20, 2023

## 5.12 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### Definitions:

“Artificial Intelligence (AI)” means a machine-based system that can, based on a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing a real or virtual environment.

“AI tools” means software, hardware, or cloud-based applications that use AI to aid in tasks like content creation, data analysis, and personalized learning. For purposes of this policy, AI tools does not include items such as spell check or grammar check.

“Automated decision tool” means an AI tool that has been specifically developed and marketed, or specifically modified, to make or to be a controlling factor in making consequential decisions.

The Cabot School District Board of Directors desires to provide guidance for the appropriate use of AI technologies in curriculum development, instruction, and related educational activities that is aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards and safeguards student data and privacy, while encouraging innovation.

Any AI tools or programs utilized by the District must adhere to state and federal laws; state rules; and federal regulations governing data use, privacy, and security. Any AI tool used must comply with the District’s policies on data privacy and security, especially concerning student information.

The superintendent shall establish a committee who shall be in charge of reviewing and approving any AI tools, including automated decision tools, before they may be used. The committee shall establish the procedures the committee shall use for approving AI tool selection. The District shall provide resources to support the integration of approved AI tools.

All curriculum and instructional materials that were created with AI tools shall align with the Arkansas Academic Standards and District educational goals.

Staff shall document the extent and manner AI tools were used in the creation of curriculum or instructional materials. Staff shall ensure the content created with the assistance of AI tools is accurate and free from bias.

The District shall regularly review the impact AI tools have on the District’s educational outcomes and shall update this policy as necessary following the review.

Legal References:           A.C.A. § 6-18-2601 et seq.  
                                  A.C.A. § 25-1-128  
                                  15 U.S.C. § 6501  
                                  20 U.S.C. § 1232g  
                                  34 C.F.R. Part 99

Date Adopted: May 20, 2025

Last Revised:

### 5:13 SUMMER SCHOOL

Cabot Public Schools may offer limited summer school courses to students currently enrolled in our school system. Information is available in the Counseling Center in April of each school year. Students are responsible for tuition cost, supplies, and transportation.

The primary reason for summer school is for students who fail a course during the regular school year. This gives the student the ability to make up the credit lost and continue with new classes the following school year. Core classes that are offered in summer school are English (levels 9, 10, 11 and 12) and math (Algebra I and II, Geometry, Bridge to Algebra II, and Algebra III). Science and history courses could also be a possibility depending upon demand for these courses.

Tuition for a semester class is one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150). Students may take a maximum of two (2) semester classes. These classes are **not** available to take as initial credit.

**COURSES FOR INITIAL CREDIT/ACCELERATION:** Physical Education (PE) and Health are offered during summer school to take as initial credit. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, rising seniors will have the option to take PreCalculus during summer school for initial credit. Additional courses may be offered in the future. Core classes taken for acceleration/initial credit require a grade of 70% or higher to receive credit and will be reflected as “Pass” or “No Credit” on the student’s transcript. Tuition for these classes is seventy-five dollar (\$75).

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-16-704

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: June 21, 2022

## 5:14 HOMEWORK

The Cabot Public School District recognizes homework as a beneficial extension of the instructional program. The term homework refers to school-related work that is assigned to be completed by the student after regular instruction is completed. This may be accomplished during the remainder of a class period or at home. Assignments should fulfill the following purposes:

1. Develop independent study skills by stimulating effort, independence, responsibility, and self-direction
2. Gain maximum benefit from classroom instruction through prior preparation
3. Reinforce skills being taught in the classroom
4. Stimulate further interests in topics being taught in the classroom.

Teachers, parents, and students all have crucial responsibilities that must be fulfilled if homework and independent study activities are to advance the student's education as intended.

The teacher must be certain that the homework and independent study activity assignments are clearly communicated, relevant to the learning objectives, and reasonable in length.

Parents should ensure that the student has an appropriate home environment for schoolwork, sufficient time without distractions, and appropriate supervision (depending on the age, maturity and responsibility level of the student).

Students must be certain that they understand the assignments, ask for help if they do not understand the assignments, and then make every effort to complete the assignments.

Occasionally, at the secondary level, a combination of some of the longer homework assignments from several teachers at one time may unavoidably result in more than the desired amount of homework for a student on one night. However, efforts will be made to minimize such occurrences through informal grade level communication.

At the beginning of the school year, students will receive and deliver to parents, written communication from their teachers regarding homework expectations.

The types and length of homework assignments should vary according to the student's level:

Kindergarten: minimal; as needed

Grades 1-3: This is the beginning of the expected practice of homework as a part of the educational program. Homework is assigned at the discretions of the teacher.

Grades 4-6: Assignments are given which, in the judgment of the teacher, will assist the student to learn and develop initiative and responsibility. Homework is a regular part of the

educational program. With the student having multiple teachers in these grade levels, coordination between teachers is important.

Junior High (7-9)

- Homework is to be a well-established part of the student's educational program
- Homework is to include routine assignments, review of classroom material, and preparation for specific academic and classroom subjects
- Homework is to provide opportunities for research and further development of initiative and responsibility.

High School (10-12)

- Homework is to be a fundamental part of the student's educational program
- Homework is to include routine assignments, review of classroom material, and preparation for specific academic and classroom subjects.
- Homework is to expand the use of previously developed independent study skills for research and longer-term projects.

Legal Reference: State Board of Education Rules & Regulations: Accreditation Standards V (G)

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: May, 2009

## 5:15 GRADING and REPORTING

Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student. Time will be set aside in the district calendar for parent-teacher conferences each semester. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by parents, guardians, or teachers. If the progress of a student is unsatisfactory in a subject, the teacher shall attempt to schedule a parent-teacher conference. In the conference, the teacher shall explain the reasons for difficulties and shall develop, cooperatively with the parents, a plan for remediation which may enhance the probability of the student succeeding. The school shall also send timely progress reports and issue grades for each nine-week grading period to keep parents/guardians informed of their student's progress.

The evaluation of each student's performance on a regular basis serves to give the parents/guardians, students, and the school necessary information to help effect academic improvement. Students' grades shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed educational objectives of the course.

The elementary schools, housing students from Kindergarten through grade 4, will use "standards based" monitoring and reporting system for evaluating student progress. The targeted standards for each grade level are listed on the reporting form using a numerical scale of 4, 3, 2 or 1. These numbers are defined as follows:

- 4 - All learning goals are consistently met or extended.
- 3 - Most of the learning goals are consistently met.
- 2 - More than half of the learning goals are consistently met.
- 1 - Few or none of the learning goals are consistently met.

Students in grade 3 will begin the transition to letter grades (A, B, C, D) which correspond to the numerical (4, 3, 2, 1) scale, while still receiving standards based grades

Students in grade 4 will receive letter grades which correspond to the numerical (4, 3, 2, 1) scale, as well as receiving standards based grades.

For citizenship and activity class grades the K-4 schools will use "O" for outstanding; "S" for Satisfactory or "N" for Needs Improvement.

The grading scale for grades five – twelve (middle schools, junior high schools and high schools) shall be as follows:

- A = 100 – 90
- B = 89 – 80
- C = 79 – 70
- D = 69-60
- F = 59 and below

For the purpose of determining grade point averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be:

- A = 4 points

B = 3 points  
C = 2 points  
D = 1 point  
F = 0 points

The grade point values for accelerated learning courses and other approved courses for weighted credit shall be one point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall still be worth 0 points.

The final grades of students who transfer in for part of a semester will be determined by blending the grades earned in the district with those earned outside the district. Each final grade will be the sum of the percentage of days in the grading period transferred from outside the district times the transferred grade from outside the district plus the percentage of days in the grading period while in the district times the grade earned in the district.

For example: The grading period had 40 days. A student transferred in with a grade of 83% earned in 10 days at the previous school. The student had a grade of 75% in our district's school earned in the remaining 30 days of the grading period. 10 days is 25% of 40 days while 30 days is 75% of 40 days. Thus the final grade would be  $.25(83) + .75(73) = 75.5\%$ .

Legal References: A.C.A. §6-15-902  
State Board of Education: Standards of Accreditation 12.02  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules and Regulations  
Governing Uniform Grading Scales for Public Secondary Schools

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: May 20, 2025

## 5:16 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The number of units students must earn to be eligible for high school graduation are to be earned from the categories listed below. A minimum of 22 units is required for graduation. In addition to the 22 units required for graduation by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, the district requires an additional ½ unit to graduate for a total of 22 ½ units. The additional required half unit will be earned in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Keystone course. Students who enroll in Cabot Public Schools after the completion of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, from a district that did not offer the Keystone course, may substitute another elective for the Keystone requirement. Accelerated learning courses or career education courses that are determined by DESE to be eligible for use in the place of a listed course may be substituted for the course as designated by DESE.

The provisions of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) serve as his/her graduation plan. Additionally, unless exempted by a student's IEP, all students must successfully pass all end-of-course (EOC) assessments they are required to take or meet the remediation required for the EOC assessment to receive academic credit for the applicable course and be eligible to graduate from high school.

English: four (4) units – 9, 10, 11, and 12

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units

- Algebra or its equivalent\* - 1 unit
- Geometry or its equivalent\* - 1 unit
- All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
- (Comparable accelerated learning courses may be substituted where applicable)

\*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science: three (3) units

- at least one (1) unit of biology or its equivalent
- one (1) unit of a physical science
- A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a third science credit

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics, one-half (1/2) unit
- World history, one (1) unit
- U.S. history, one (1) unit

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit

**Note:** While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety (digital): one-half (1/2) unit

Economics – one half (½) unit – dependent upon the certification of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit

**CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units**

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student’s contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

The Core and career focus units must total at least twenty-two (22) units to graduate. Additionally, the district requires ½ unit for a total of 22 ½ units to graduate which may be taken from any electives offered by the district.

Computer Science Flex Unit – (optional) A flex unit of Computer Science and Mathematics, Essentials of Computer Programming, AP Computer Science, or IB Computer Science may replace the 4<sup>th</sup> math requirement or the 3<sup>rd</sup> science requirement. Two distinct units of computer science courses listed above may replace the 4<sup>th</sup> math requirement and the 3<sup>rd</sup> science requirement. If the 4<sup>th</sup> math requirement and the 3<sup>rd</sup> science requirement have been met through other coursework, any of the computer science courses listed above may be used for career focus credit.

Each high school student shall be required to take at least one digital learning course for credit to graduate (Act 1280 of 2013).

Each high school student shall be required to complete a course which teaches the financial literacy standards (Act 480 of 2017).

All graduates must pass the Arkansas Civics Exam (Act 478 of 2017).

Beginning with the entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 2022-2023 school year, each high school student shall be required to earn one (1) credit of a computer science course or a career and technical education course related to computer science to graduate (Act 414 of 2021 and Act 654 of 2023).

Legal Reference: State Board of Education; Standards of Accreditation 14.02

Date Adopted: July 19, 2011

Last Revised: May 20, 2025

## **5:16:1 HONORS PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

Students graduating with “Honors”, “High Honors”, or “Distinguished Honors” must also complete the following Honors Program Curriculum.

1. Four (4) units of English, including junior and senior level Advanced English, Advanced Placement English, or college level English
2. Four (4) units of Math, including Algebra I and II, Geometry, and either an advanced math course or a computer science course
3. Three (3) units of Science: Physical Science, Biology and Chemistry or Physics
4. Three (3) units of Social Studies: American History, World History, and Civics/Economics
5. One-half (1/2) unit of Physical Education
6. One-half (1/2) unit of Health
7. One-half (1/2) unit of Fine Arts
8. One-half (1/2) unit of Oral Communications
9. Two (2) units of the same foreign language
10. Four and one-half (4-1/2) units of electives

**Total 22 ½ units**

Note: Students who accept placement into an advanced level course should be aware of the significant time commitment that they are making. Students should not over-commit to part-time jobs, and they should balance extracurricular activities, total obligations and responsibilities with time necessary to prepare for honors level course work. Students who must work many hours in part-time jobs or who have many other time commitments should seriously consider enrolling in regular level courses. A student enrolling in Cabot High School as a senior who did not have the opportunity to take an advanced level English course during their junior year may enroll in two advanced level courses during their senior year in order to qualify for honor graduate status (e.g. AP Language & Composition + AP Literature).

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: May 20, 2025

## 5:18 CONCURRENT AND DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES

### **Concurrent Enrollment Courses:**

Concurrent courses will be taken to fulfill a high school graduation requirement. Students will earn high school credit simultaneously with college credit. The grade earned will appear on the student's high school transcript and will be calculated into their cumulative high school GPA. All concurrent courses will be offered on the Cabot High School campus during the regular school day and will be taught by Cabot Public Schools faculty. NOTE: If a student has an IEP or 504 Plan, it will be followed as written.

As defined in the memorandum of understanding with ASU-Beebe, the courses noted in the District's Course Selection Guide are the District's only concurrent course offerings.

Students successfully completing these courses will receive 1 credit per course which will count toward Cabot High School graduation requirements. Students will also receive three (3) hours of college credit through Arkansas State University at Beebe. These hours will be recorded on an ASU Beebe transcript.

### **Dual Enrollment Courses:**

Dual enrollment courses will be taken for college credit only. However, upon successful completion, the student may request that the course fulfill a high school graduation requirement and be added to his/her high school transcript and may be calculated into their cumulative high school GPA by submitting the course description, syllabus, and college transcript to the Student Success Center. These courses will be offered by post-secondary institutions (on their campus or online) and are taught by their faculty. NOTE: If a student has an IEP or 504 Plan, the student should contact the post-secondary institution's office of disability services to discuss accommodations as soon as possible. IEP and 504 Plan accommodations do NOT automatically transfer to these courses.

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: April 21, 2026

**Commented [KD1]:** Updated to include the same information on concurrent and dual enrollment courses that is in the Course Selection Book

## 5:19 GRADING SCALE, GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND RANK-IN CLASS PROCEDURE

A student's grade point average (GPA) will be determined by taking the average of the grades received for each unit earned in credit classes. All credit classes attempted in grades 9-12 will be counted in the GPA.

Point values for grade for Advanced Placement (AP), other weighted courses, and all other courses used in calculating the GPA are as follows:

PERCENTAGES	GRADE	POINT VALUE	Weighted POINT VALUE*
90 – 100 %	A	4 points	5 points
80 – 89 %	B	3 points	4 points
70 – 79 %	C	2 points	3 points
60 – 69 %	D	1 point	2 points
59% and below	F	0 points	0 points

\*In order to receive weighted credit, students must take both semesters of the course and take the appropriate exam, if applicable. Weighting will be reduced to a 4.0 scale on the final transcript for students who do not take the applicable exams.

GPA's will be used to determine class rank with the exception of students with a modified curriculum. High school students who have taken weighted credit courses and whose GPA exceeds a 4.0 will have their GPA and class ranking figured on the number of units required for graduation (22 ½). This is to prevent students from being penalized for taking a greater number of credit classes. Any grade lower than an "A" must be included in the 22 ½ units used for calculating the GPA. Also, all grades for weighted credit classes will be used in calculating the GPA.

Final class ranking will be computed on the basis of eight (8) semesters. Students will be advised on preliminary GPA and class ranking at the end of six and seven (7) semesters. For students graduating in less than eight (8) semesters, the preliminary GPA and class ranking will be at the end of the first semester of the senior year and final GPA and ranking will be at the time the graduation requirements are completed.

Grades will reflect academic achievement only. Parents who are concerned about helping their students to improve their school progress through better study habits may contact the guidance counselor, either by telephone or a scheduled personal visit.

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: April 21, 2026

## 5:20 GRADUATION HONORS

Academic recognition will be given in three categories. Graduating with “Honors” will be the recognition for students who have earned a GPA of 3.5 – 3.75. Graduating with “High Honors” will be the recognition given for students who have earned a GPA higher than 3.75 and successfully completed one (1) additional AP/Concurrent Credit course beyond the required junior and senior English. Graduating with “Distinguished Honors” will be the recognition given for students who have earned a GPA higher than 4.0 and successfully completed two (2) or more AP/Concurrent Credit courses beyond the required junior and senior English.

To qualify for the graduation honors, students must complete the Honors Program Curriculum and shall have no grade of D or F on their final transcript. Additionally, students may not have lost academic credit due to lack of attendance. Any course retaken for grade improvement, with the exception of Honors Algebra I and Honors Geometry, must be the identical course (e.g. to improve a grade in Honors Biology, the student shall retake Honors Biology).

The senior(s) with the highest grade point average (GPA) after eight (8) semesters will be named Valedictorian(s). The senior(s) with the second highest GPA will be named Salutatorian(s)

Legal References:     A.C.A. § 6-18-101 (a) (1)  
                              A.C.A. § 6-18-101 (a) (2)  
                              A.C.A. § 6-18-101 (b)

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: June 20, 2023

## **5:21 HEALTH SERVICES**

The Board believes that healthy children promote a better learning environment, are more capable of high student achievement, and will result in healthier, more productive adults. Therefore, the goal of the District's health services is to promote a healthy student body. This requires both the education of students concerning healthy behaviors, as well as providing health care services to pupils.

The District shall develop an age-appropriate seizure education program for the District's students consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America.

While the school nurse is under the supervision of the school principal, the delegation of health care duties shall be in accordance with the Arkansas Nurse Practice Act and the Arkansas State Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations Chapter Five: Delegation of Nursing Care.

Annually, the information reported in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Health Services Survey shall be provided to the Board.

Legal References:   A.C.A. § 6-18-709  
                          A.C.A. § 6-18-720

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: June 20, 2023

## **5:22 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The Board believes in providing opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities that can help enrich the student's educational experience. At the same time, the Board believes that a student's participation in extracurricular activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Interruptions of instructional time in the classroom are to be minimal and absences from class to participate in extracurricular activities shall not exceed one per week per extracurricular activity (tournaments excepted) \*. Additionally, a student's participation in, and the District's operation of, extracurricular activities shall be subject to the following policy. All students meeting this policy's criteria and eligible for extracurricular activities.

### **Definitions:**

"Extracurricular activities" are defined as: any school sponsored program where students from two or more schools are competing for the purpose of receiving an award, rating, recognition, or criticism, or qualification for additional competition. Examples include, but are not limited to, interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, band, choral, math, or science competitions, and club activities.

"Academic Courses" are those courses for which class time is scheduled, which can be credited to meet the minimum requirements for graduation, is taught by a teacher required to have State certification in the course, and has a course content guide which has been approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. Any of these courses for which concurrent high school credit is earned may be from an institution of higher education recognized by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. If a student passes an academic course offered on a block schedule, the course can be counted twice toward meeting the requirement for students to pass four (4) academic courses per semester as required by this policy.

"Supplemental Improvement Program" is an additional instructional opportunity for identified students outside of their regular classroom and meets the criteria outlined in the current Arkansas Activities Association Handbook.

### **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS: Junior High**

A student promoted from the sixth to the seventh grade automatically meets scholarship requirements. A student promoted from the seventh to the eighth grade automatically meets scholarship requirements for the first semester. The second semester eighth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester, three (3) of which shall be in the core curriculum areas of math, science, social studies, and language arts.

The first semester ninth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester, three (3) of which shall be in the core curriculum areas as specified by the Division of Elementary and Secondary's Standards of Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools.

The second semester ninth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed (4) academic courses the previous semester which count toward his/her graduation requirements.

Ninth-grade students must meet the requirements of the senior high scholarship rule by the end of the second semester in the ninth grade in order to be eligible to participate the fall semester of their tenth-grade year.

#### **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS: Senior High**

In order to remain eligible for competitive interscholastic activity, a student must have passed (4) academic courses the previous semester and either:

- 1) Have earned a minimum Grade Point Average of 2.0 from all academic courses the previous semester; or
- 2) If the student has passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester but does not have a 2.0 GPS, then the student must be enrolled and successfully participating in a supplemental instruction program to maintain their competitive interscholastic extracurricular eligibility.

#### **STUDENTS WITH AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

In order to be considered eligible to participate in competitive interscholastic activities, students with disabilities must pass at least four (4) courses per semester as required by their individual education program (IEP).

#### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Students who are determined to be experiencing homelessness by the school's homeless liaison shall be eligible for participation in interscholastic activities.

#### **ARKANSAS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION**

In addition to the foregoing rules, the district shall abide by the rules and regulations of the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) governing interscholastic activities. AAA provides catastrophic insurance coverage for students participating in AAA governed extracurricular activities who are enrolled in school. As a matter of District policy, no student may participate in an AAA governed extracurricular activity unless the student is enrolled in a district school to ensure all students are eligible for AAA catastrophic insurance.

#### **SCHOOL CHOICE TRANSFERS**

A student who transfers under a legal school choice option shall not be denied participation in an extracurricular activity where the student transfers based exclusively on the student's decision to transfer. A student who transfers after July 1 of the year the student enters grade

seven (7) shall complete a Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form as defined by AAA, which must be signed by the:

- Superintendent of the student's resident school district;
- Superintendent of the nonresident school district to which the student transfers; and
- Parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student.

The completed Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form shall be filed with the non-resident school district where the student transfers and the AAA. The Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form shall be signed by the superintendent of a student's resident school district and the superintendent of the nonresident school district to which a student transfers unless there is demonstrable evidence of recruiting by the receiving school district personnel or that the student is transferring to the nonresident school district solely for athletic purposes.

#### **STUDENTS ARRESTED AND/OR CHARGED WITH FELONY OR MISDEMEANOR**

When the District receives official notification that a student has been arrested and/or charged with a felony, regardless of whether the alleged offense occurred on or off school grounds, the student will be indefinitely suspended from all extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities pending disposition of the charge(s). In order to be reinstated, the student's parent or guardian (or the student if over eighteen (18) years of age) must provide an official, final disposition of the charge(s) to the principal. If the student is convicted of a criminal act that is a felony, the student will, at a minimum, be dismissed from extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities for one calendar year.

When the District receives official notification that a student has been arrested and/or charged with a misdemeanor or is convicted of a misdemeanor, regardless of whether the offense occurred on or off school grounds, the student may be suspended from any or all extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities for a definite or indefinite period of time. In order to be reinstated, the student's parent or guardian (or the student if over eighteen (18) years of age) must provide an official, final disposition of the charge(s) to the principal.

#### **Legal References:**

Arkansas Activities Association Handbook  
A.C.A. § 6-4-302  
A.C.A. § 6-15-2907  
A.C.A. § 6-16-151  
A.C.A. § 6-18-114  
A.C.A. § 6-18-115  
A.C.A. § 6-18-227  
A.C.A. § 6-18-713  
A.C.A. § 6-18-1904  
A.C.A. § 6-28-108  
Commissioner's Memo COM-18-009  
Commissioner's Memo LS-18-015

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004  
Last Revised: May 21, 2024

### **5:22.1—EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - ELEMENTARY**

The Board believes in providing opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities that can help enrich the student's educational experience. At the same time, the Board believes that a student's participation in extracurricular activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Interruptions of instructional time in the classroom are to be minimal and absences from class to participate in extracurricular activities shall not exceed one per week per extracurricular activity (tournaments or other similar events excepted with approval of the Superintendent) All students are eligible for extracurricular activities unless specifically denied eligibility on the basis of criteria outlined in this policy.

A student may lose his/her eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities when, in the opinion of the school's administration, the student's participation in such an activity may adversely jeopardize his/her academic achievement. Students may also be denied permission to participate in extracurricular activities as a consequence of disciplinary action taken by the administration for inappropriate behavior.

For the purposes of this policy, extracurricular activities are defined as: any school sponsored program where students from one or more schools meet, work, perform, practice under supervision outside of regular class time, or are competing for the purpose of receiving an award, rating, recognition, or criticism, or qualification for additional competition. Examples include, but are not limited to, interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, band, choral, math, or science competitions, and club activities.

Legal References: State Board of Education Standards for Accreditation 10.05 and 10.06

Date Adopted: July, 2005

Last Revised:

## **5:22.2 EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS**

“Homeschooled student” means a student legally enrolled in an Arkansas homeschool and who meets or has met the criteria for being a home-schooled student, as established by A.C.A. § 6-15-503.

“Interscholastic activity” means an activity between schools subject to rules of the Arkansas Activities Association that is outside the regular curriculum of the school district, such as an athletic activity, fine arts program, or a special interest group or club.

Home-schooled students whose parents or guardians are legal residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the student's resident school zone or their applicable attendance zone's school as permitted by this policy.

Homeschooled students whose parent or legal guardian are not residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the District if:

- The superintendent of the student's resident district and the superintendent of the District both agree in writing to allow the student to participate in interscholastic activities at the District; or
- The student's resident school does not offer the interscholastic activity and the superintendent of the non-resident district agrees to allow the student to enroll in the interscholastic activity.

Although not guaranteed participation in an interscholastic activity, homeschool students who meet the provisions of this policy, AAA Rules, and applicable Arkansas statutes shall have an equal opportunity to try out and participate in interscholastic activities without discrimination. The District shall provide a reasonable alternative to any prerequisite for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity that the home-schooled student is unable to meet because of his or her enrollment in a home school.

No student shall be required to pay for individual or group instruction in order to participate in an interscholastic activity.

To be eligible to try out and participate in interscholastic activities, the student or the parent of a student shall mail or hand deliver the student's request to participate to the student's school's principal before the signup, tryout or participation deadline established for traditional students. Additionally, the student shall demonstrate academic eligibility by obtaining a minimum test score of the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile or better in the previous 12 months on the Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition; another nationally recognized norm-referenced test; or a minimum score on a test approved by the State Board of Education.

A student who meets the requirements for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity is required to register for no more than one non-academic course in the District's school where the student is intending to participate in an interscholastic activity that coincides with the interscholastic activity in which the homeschooled student participates and shall be required to be at school only when participation in the interscholastic activity requires other students who participate in the interscholastic activity to be at school.

The student shall regularly attend the class in which the student is registered beginning no later than the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) day of the semester in which the student's interscholastic activity participation is desired. The student must attend the practices for the interscholastic activity to the same extent as is required of traditional students.

A student and the parent or legal guardian of the student shall sign and return an acknowledgement of receipt and review of an information sheet regarding signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest before the student may participate in an athletic activity and before each school year the student participates in an athletic activity.

A homeschooled student who has met the try out criteria and who has been selected to participate in the interscholastic activity shall meet the following criteria that also apply to traditional students enrolled in the school:

- standards of behavior and codes of conduct;
- attend the practices for the interscholastic activity to the same extent as is required of traditional students;
- required drug testing;
- permission slips, waivers, physical exams; and
- participation or activity fees.

Students who participate in extracurricular or athletic activities under this policy will be transported to and from the interscholastic activities on the same basis as other students are transported.

A home schooled student may begin participating in an interscholastic activity immediately upon being approved to participate by the District if:

- The home schooled student has not withdrawn from an Arkansas Activities Association member school; or

- The student has withdrawn from an AAA member school and enrolled in a homeschool but did not participate in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity sport at the student's resident district prior to the student's withdrawal from the AAA member school.

A student who withdrew from an AAA member school who participated in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity sport at the student's resident district during the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days shall not be eligible to immediately participate in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity sport in the District. The student will not become eligible for full participation until the completion of the three hundred sixty-five (365) day period from when the student withdrew. A student who is not eligible for full participation may participate in tryouts, practices, classes, or other endeavors associated with the

interscholastic activity until the completion of the three hundred sixty-five (365) day period from when the student withdrew.

### **STUDENTS ARRESTED AND/OR CHARGED WITH FELONY OR MISDEMEANOR**

When the District receives official notification that a student has been arrested and/or charged with a felony, regardless of whether the alleged offense occurred on or off school grounds, the student will be indefinitely suspended from all extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities pending disposition of the charge(s). In order to be reinstated, the student's parent or guardian (or the student if over eighteen (18) years of age) must provide an official, final disposition of the charge(s) to the principal. If the student is convicted of a criminal act that is a felony, the student will, at a minimum, be dismissed from extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities for one calendar year.

When the District receives official notification that a student has been arrested and/or charged with a misdemeanor or is convicted of a misdemeanor, regardless of whether the offense occurred on or off school grounds, the student may be suspended from any or all extracurricular activities and/or AAA-affiliated activities for a definite or indefinite period of time. In order to be reinstated, the student's parent or guardian (or the student if over eighteen (18) years of age) must provide an official, final disposition of the charge(s) to the principal.

#### Legal Reference:

- A.C.A. § 6-15-509
- A.C.A. § 6-16-151
- A.C.A. § 6-18-232
- A.C.A. § 6-18-713
- Arkansas Activities Association Handbook
- Commissioner's Memo COM-18-009
- Commissioner's Memo LS-18-015
- Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Homeschools

Date Adopted: May 21, 2013

Last Revised: May 21, 2024

### **5:23 CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS**

High School students are classified according to the minimum number of credits earned. The following is the classification scale: Freshmen A student promoted from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Sophomore A student with 5.5 – 11 credits

Junior A student with 11.5 –16 credits

Senior A student with 16.5 or more credits

*Note: A student with 15 credits who declares that they intend to graduate at the end of the current school year and who is enrolled in enough classes to earn seven and one-half (7 ½) credits can be pictured in the yearbook with the senior class.*

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Last Revised: June 19, 2018

## **5:24 ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

The Cabot School District has an alternative learning environment (ALE) that is part of an intervention program designed to provide guidance, counseling and academic support to students who are experiencing emotional, social, or academic problems.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint an Alternative Education Placement Team which shall have the responsibility of determining student placement in the ALE. The team should consist of:

- School counselor from the referring school;
- Building principal or assistant principal from the referring school;
- One (1) or more of the student's regular classroom teachers;
- LEA special education or 504 representative, if applicable;
- Parent or guardian of the student, if they choose to participate;
- ALE administrator or ALE teacher, or both;
- At the option of the school district, the student may be included as a member of the placement team

To be eligible for ALE, a student must exhibit two (2) or more of the following characteristics identified in section 4.02.1.1 and section 4.02.1.2:

- 4.02.1.1- Situations that negatively affect the student's academic and social progress may include, but are not limited to:
  - Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and mathematics
  - Abuse: physical, mental, or sexual;
  - Frequent relocation of residency;
  - Homelessness;
  - Inadequate emotional support;
  - Mental/physical health problems;
  - Pregnancy; or
  - Single parenting
- 4.02.1.2- Students placed at risk, though intelligent and capable, typically manifest one or more of the following characteristics:
  - Personal or family problems or situations;
  - Recurring absenteeism;
  - Dropping out from school;
  - Disruptive behavior.

The Cabot School District, with input from the ALE teachers and administrator, shall establish a scoring rubric for students assigned to ALE. This rubric shall be the basis by which the assigned students can earn points toward being allowed to return to the regular school instructional program.

The district's ALE program shall follow class size, staffing, and expenditure requirements identified in the DESE Rules Governing the Distribution of Student Special Needs Funding and the Determination of Allowable Expenditures of Those Funds.

The ALE program shall be evaluated at least annually to determine its overall effectiveness.

Legal References:   A.C.A. § 6-20-2305(b)(2)  
                          A.C.A. § 6-48-102, 103  
                          DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding

Date Adopted: December 14, 2004

Date Revised: May 21, 2013

### **5.24.1—ALE PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The ALE program shall be evaluated at least annually to determine its overall effectiveness at providing a non-punitive environment that is conducive to learning, that eliminates traditional barriers to learning, and at compliance with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding. The evaluation shall specifically address how the use of ALE funds is in alignment with the district's district strategic plan in addressing identified achievement gaps and student performance deficiencies.

Legal References:     A.C.A. § 6-15-2914  
                              DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding

Date Adopted: May 20, 2025

Last Revised:

## 5:25—WELLNESS POLICY

The health and physical well-being of our students directly affects their ability to learn. Childhood obesity increases the incidence of adult diseases occurring in children and adolescents such as heart disease, high blood, pressure and diabetes. The increased risk carries forward into their adulthood. Research indicates that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help prevent obesity and the diseases resulting from it. It is understood that the eating habits and exercise patterns of students cannot be changed overnight, but at the same time, the Board of Directors believes it is necessary to strive to create a culture in our schools that consistently promotes good nutrition and physical activity.

The problem of obesity and inactivity is a public health issue. The Board is keenly aware that it has taken years for this problem to reach its present level and will similarly take years to correct. The responsibility for addressing the problem lies not only with the schools and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, but with parents, the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the District shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions that improve the health and physical activity of our students.

### Goals

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the district will adhere to the Arkansas Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Arkansas Public Schools. Adhering to these Rules will include, but is not limited to district efforts to:

1. Appoint a district school health wellness coordinator and/or designee who shall be responsible for ensuring that all required evaluations and documentation are complete to ensure policy compliance.
2. Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
3. Enforce existing physical education requirements and engage students in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity;
4. Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
5. Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
6. Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances;
7. Ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students;
8. Establish class schedules, and bus routes that don't directly or indirectly restrict meal access;
9. Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
10. Establish no more than nine (9) school wide events, which permit exceptions to the food and beverage limitations established by Rule. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar;

11. Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
12. Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas's or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria; including Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, and food and beverage marketing and advertising regulations;
13. Restrict access to vended foods, competitive foods, and foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as required by law and Rule;
14. Conform new and/or renewed vending contracts to the content restrictions contained in the Rules and reduce district dependence on profits from the sale of FMNV;
15. Provide professional development opportunities to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
16. Utilize the School Health Index available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to assess triennially how well the district is doing at implementing this wellness policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students.
17. School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors outside of school;
18. The district will continue to support the promotion of community life-long healthy habits through formal Joint Use Agreement;
19. Demonstrate compliance with the public notification requirements via the district website.

#### **Advisory Committee**

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health of our students, a School Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Committee (SNPAAC) has been established and is comprised of a variety of stakeholders who ensure age-appropriate recommendations are made which correlate to our district's grade configurations. Members of the district's School Board, school administrators, school nutrition personnel, physical education teachers, school health professionals, parents, students, health professional groups, and community members shall be included in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the district's wellness policy to the extent interested persons from each group desire to be included.

The SNPAAC shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by statute and Rule. The overarching goal of the committee shall be to promote student wellness by monitoring how well the district is doing at implementing this policy. The SNPAAC shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 of the CDC's School Health Index as a basis for assessing each school's progress toward meeting the requirements of this policy. The results of the annual assessment shall be included in each school's ACSIP, provided to each school's principal, and reported to the board. Building-level committees or designees will establish goals for nutrition education and/or promotion and physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote wellness.

#### **Adoption Awareness Instruction**

The District shall provide any information provided to students on the District's adoption awareness instruction that was in written form to the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to a pregnancy student who is enrolled in the District.

### **Breast Feeding**

In addition to providing age-appropriate education for students regarding the nutritional benefits of breastmilk and breastfeeding practices, the District shall provide:

- Space in the District's school facilities for District employees, students, and volunteers who are breastfeeding mothers that is a private, secure, and sanitary room or other location, other than a toilet stall, that contains access to a power source for a breast pump or any other equipment used to express breast milk where an employee, student, or volunteer can express breast milk;
- Space in the District's school facilities for District students who are breastfeeding mothers that is a private, secure, and sanitary room or other location, other than a toilet stall, where a student can breastfeed the student's child;
- Permission to bring a breast pump and any other equipment used to express breast milk to school;
- Access to a place to safely store breast milk, which shall include, but not be limited to, a refrigerator or cooler in:
  - A nurse's office;
  - A teachers' lounge; or
  - Another private location or location with limited accessibility in which the breast milk may be safely secured;
- Access to a location to clean a breast pump and any other equipment used to express breast milk at school.
- Break time:
  - To an employee or volunteer for the purpose of expressing breast milk that, to the extent possible, shall run concurrently with existing break times; and
  - To a student that is a reasonable amount of time to accommodate the student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus;
- That a student shall not incur an academic penalty for expressing breast milk or for breastfeeding the student's child on the District's campus; and
- A student the opportunity to make up any work missed due to expressing breast milk or for breastfeeding the student's child on the District's campus.

### **Child Care**

The District shall provide student mothers and fathers information regarding available child care services.

Legal References: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq. as amended by PL 111-296 (Section 204) of 2010. (Section 204 is codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1758 (b))  
Child Nutrition Act of 1966 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq.  
7 C.F.R. § 210.18  
7 C.F.R. § 210.31  
A.C.A. § 6-16-158  
A.C.A. § 6-18-234

A.C.A. § 6-18-719  
A.C.A. § 6-20-709  
A.C.A. § 11-5-116  
A.C.A. §§ 20-17-133, 134, and 135  
DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and  
Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols  
Arkansas Public Schools Allowable Competitive Foods/Beverages -  
Maximum Portion Size List for Middle, Junior High, and High School  
Commissioner's Memo CNU-17-010  
Commissioner's Memo CNU-17-013  
Commissioner's Memo CNU-17-016  
Nutrition Standards

Date Adopted: April 25, 2006

Revised: June 20, 2023

## **5:26 NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) became a federal law in November, 1974. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of students' educational records. FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent of eligible students believes are inaccurate or misleading
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Upon request, the district discloses education records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which a student intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

A copy of the district's guidelines for compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is available from the schools' offices.

Date Adopted: July 2002  
Last Revised: July 2005

**5:27 NON-DISCRIMINATION and SECTION 504**

No pupil shall be discriminated against because of age, color, disability, parental status, marital status, race, national origin, religion, sex or veteran status. Parents who have a temporary or permanent disability may request the District to provide appropriate accommodations necessary for them to participate in essential instructional activities of their students. Students who are at least eighteen (18) years of age may submit their own requests.

It is the policy of the Cabot School District to provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services.

Under Section 504, due process rights of qualified students with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed in the Cabot School District. The Director of Student Services serves as the Coordinator of Section 504 and handles other equity issues for the Cabot School District. The Director of Student Services may be contacted at the district office, 602 N. Lincoln Street, Cabot, Arkansas, 72023 or by phone at 501-843-3363, between the hours of 8:00 and 4:30, Monday through Friday. Each school has a 504 Team Chairperson, and may be contacted at their respective buildings.

Date Adopted: June, 2007  
Last Revised: June, 2007

## **5:28 NINE-WEEK EXAMS (GRADES 7-12)**

Students in grades 7-12 will be assessed using nine-week exams at the end of each grading period as opposed to a semester exam.

Test Weighting – The value of a nine-week exam will be equal to the test of the greatest weight in the same quarter in a particular class. Therefore, the weight of the exam will vary between teachers but will more closely correspond to the weight of other tests given in each individual class.

Date Adopted: July 19, 2011

Last Revised: June 21, 2022

## 5:29 DISTRICT WEBSITE

The Cabot School District shall maintain a web page to provide information about its schools, students, and activities to the community. This policy is adopted to promote continuity between the different pages on the district website by establishing guidelines for their construction and operation.

The Cabot School District website shall be used for educational purposes only. It shall not create either a public or a limited public forum. The website shall not use “cookies” to collect or retain identifying information about visitors to its website nor shall any such information be given to “third parties.” Any data collected shall be used solely for the purpose of monitoring site activity to help the district improve the usefulness of the site to its visitors.

The District’s website shall be under the supervision of the District’s Communication Department. They shall have the responsibility for ensuring that web pages meet appropriate levels of academic standards and are in compliance with these guidelines and any additional administrative regulations. To this end the District’s Communication Department shall have the authority to review and edit any proposed changes to web pages to ensure their compliance with this policy. All such editing shall be viewpoint neutral.

District and school web pages shall also conform to the following guidelines.

- 1) All pages on the District’s website may contain advertising and links only for educational or school purposes.
- 2) The District’s home page shall contain links to existing individual school’s web pages and the school home pages shall link back to the District’s home page. The District’s home page may also include links to educational extracurricular organization’s web pages which shall also link back to the District’s home page.
- 3) No web page on the District website may contain public message boards or chat rooms.
- 4) All web pages on the District website shall be constructed to download in a reasonable length of time.
- 5) With the exception of students who may retain the copyright of material they have created that is displayed on a District web page, all materials displayed on the District website are owned by Cabot School District.
- 6) Included on the District’s website shall be:
  - a) Local and state revenue sources;
  - b) Administrator and teacher salary and benefit expenditure data;
  - c) District balances, including legal balances and building fund balances;
  - d) Minutes of regular, emergency, and special meetings of the school board;
  - e) The district’s budget for the ensuing year;
  - f) A financial breakdown of monthly expenditures of the district;

- g) The salary schedule for all employees including extended contract and supplementary pay amounts;
- h) Current contract information (not including social security numbers, telephone numbers, personal addresses or signatures) for all district employees;
- i) The district's annual budget;
- j) The annual statistical report of the district;
- k) Agenda of regular, emergency, and special meetings of the District board of directors;
- l) The names, email addresses, position (including zones), and terms of office for all members of the school district board of directors;
- m) The district's personnel policies;
- n) The annual School Performance Report;
- o) School Level Improvement Plans;
- p) The District Strategic Plan;
- q) Student discipline policies;
- r) Comprehensive School Counseling Plan;
- s) District financial policies;
- t) Student handbooks;
- u) Annual Report to the Public;
- v) Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Plan;
- w) Vaccination Immunization Report;
- x) School District Calendar;
- y) Cabot Public Schools waivers;
- z) The total amount of state funds used for teacher salaries.

Before July 15 of each year, the District shall post on its website the following information:

- The dyslexia intervention programs used during the previous school year that were specifically responsive to assisting students with dyslexia.
  - The number of students during the previous year who received dyslexia intervention;
- and
- The total number of students identified with dyslexia during the previous school year.

If the District's reading curriculum is not taken from the DESE list of approved curricula, the District shall post the reading curriculum the District uses and a statement that the curriculum is not on the list of DESE approved curricula.

The information and data required in items A through K in 6 above shall be the actual data for the previous two school-years and the projected data for the current school-year.

The District shall include the following information on its website that may be accessed through a link located on the District's homepage titled "Title IX":

- Contact information for the District's Title IX Coordinator;
- A statement that any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator in person or by using the mailing address, telephone number, or email address provided. A report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, and may be on the individual's own behalf or on behalf of another individual

who is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment;

- Copies of the District’s policies regarding Title IX and sexual harassment;
- Copies of the District’s procedures governing the grievance and appeal process;
- The process for filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment; and
- Direct links to or copies of the materials used to train the District’s Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers.

The District shall include the following information on its website that may be accessed through a link located on the District’s homepage titled “Military Families”:

- The student enrollment application process;
- Career-ready pathways and other academic or education programs offered;
- Required academic courses for each curriculum and elective course options;
- School and community-sponsored extracurricular activities, including without limitation individual and team sports, clubs, junior reserve officer training corps opportunities, and Purple Star School program ambassadors;
- Notable District and District school Purple Star School Programs;
- The District military family education coordinator contact information; and
- The District schools’ military family education facilitator contact information.

The District shall post the following on the District website that may be accessed through a link titled “Antisemitism/Title VI”:

1. The District’s definition of antisemitism;
2. A statement that antisemitism is prohibited in the District’s educational programs and activities;
3. A statement that complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism may be filed with the Title VI Coordinator;
4. Contact information for the District’s Title VI Coordinator; and
5. Information on how to file a complaint of antisemitism with the Title VI Coordinator at the Arkansas Department of Education.

Legal References:     A.C.A. § 6-11-129  
                           A.C.A. § 6-15-1402  
                           A.C.A. § 6-15-2006  
                           A.C.A. § 6-15-2101  
                           A.C.A. § 6-15-2914  
                           A.C.A. § 6-15-2919  
                           A.C.A. § 6-16-2001 et seq.  
                           A.C.A. § 6-17-1901  
                           A.C.A. § 6-18-702  
                           A.C.A. § 6-18-2001 et seq.  
                           A.C.A. § 6-25-105  
                           A.C.A. § 6-28-108  
                           A.C.A. § 6-28-301  
                           A.C.A. § 6-41-606

A.C.A. § 6-41-611  
DESE Rules Governing How to Meet the Needs of Children with  
Dyslexia  
DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and  
Accountability Act  
DESE Rules Governing Act 1240 Waivers  
DESE Rules Governing Documents Posted to School District and  
Education Service Cooperative Websites  
20 U.S.C. § 1232 g  
15 U.S.C. § 6501 (COPPA)  
34 C.F.R. § 106.8  
34 C.F.R. § 106.45

Date Adopted: July 19, 2011  
Last Revised: May 20, 2025

### **5.30—ARKANSAS COURSE CHOICE PROGRAM**

District students in grades six through twelfth (6-12) are eligible to take courses through the Arkansas Course Choice Program (ACCP) if the student is:

- Seeking to take a course not offered by the District; or
- Attending a District school that received a school letter grade of C, D, or F and the course is required for graduation.

The ACCP course catalog shall be made available to all students during student course selection. The District shall not actively discourage, intimidate, or threaten a student during course selection to not take a course through the ACCP.

A student attending courses through the ACCP shall enroll in at least one (1) course at the District, which may be either in person or a digital course offered by the District.

A District student attending courses through the ACCP is entitled to the following services as if the student were attending courses at the District:

1. Required assessments, including without limitation:
  - a. Statewide assessments;
  - b. Advanced Placement; and
  - c. International Baccalaureate,
2. Participation in extracurricular or cocurricular activities; and
3. Special education services pursuant to the student's individualized education program.

Credits earned through the ACCP shall appear on a student's official transcript and count fully towards the student's graduation requirements.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-15-1701 et seq.

Date Adopted : June 20, 2023

Last Revised : May 20, 2025