

VII. Instructional Program

7.01 Curriculum

The Superintendent will coordinate the design and development of a comprehensive curriculum plan in accordance with state law and any requirements of the State Department of Education.

7.02 Textbooks

Textbooks will be purchased and distributed in accordance with State Department of Education regulations. Only textbooks recommended by the local textbook committee will be approved by the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. The local textbook committee will be appointed by the Board and will consist of members, including parents, who will serve a term of one year. Students are loaned textbooks for the duration of the course that requires the textbook and are responsible for the care of the textbook. Students must reimburse the Board for the cost of any textbooks that are lost or damaged beyond reasonable wear and tear.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-36-62 (1975)]

7.03 Academic Standards

Teachers will assign grades and confer academic credit for work and activities performed by students in accordance with objective and generally accepted instructional and grading standards, applicable laws and regulations, and criteria specified by the school system.

7.04 Credit Recovery

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for a program through which a student may recover credits in one or more failed courses, in compliance with regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education. The curriculum will align with the State Board of Education course of study and study content standards in which the student seeking credit recovery is deficient.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(10)]

7.05 Testing

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement a standardized testing program that will include, at a minimum, all testing required under state and federal law. All standardized tests are to be conducted in accordance with the appropriate test administration manual guidelines and any rules or regulations that are intended to ensure their security and validity. Teachers are authorized to conduct tests for their courses in order to determine their students' abilities, knowledge and skills, and to use in calculating a student's grade.

7.06 *Summer School Operations*

A “summer school” program may be implemented in compliance with regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education. Summer school is provided as a service by the Board and is separate and distinct from the regular academic year. The Superintendent is authorized to develop and maintain rules and regulations for the operation of summer school, including requirements for enrollment, attendance, transportation, location, and tuition.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(6)]

7.07 *Dual Enrollment*

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board may establish guidelines in accordance with the regulations of the State Department of Education by which qualified high school students are allowed to take post-secondary college courses for high school credit.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(11)]

7.08 *Virtual School Option*

7.08.1 Scope and Delivery of Services –Alabama Act No. 2015-89 requires “at a minimum, each local board of education to adopt a policy for providing a virtual school option for eligible students in grades 9-12. The policy shall offer students an online pathway for earning a high school diploma.” The Dale County School District shall provide a virtual option for 9- 12 grade students with course opportunities consistent with District instructional goals and aligned with Alabama’s academic standards, curriculum frameworks, and assessments.

7.08.2 Student Eligibility Criteria – Students must meet the following eligibility criteria to participate in the virtual pathway:

- a. Have access to the internet and to a computer outside of school
- b. Must meet all enrollment guidelines for attending the Dale County School District
- c. Maintain minimum overall GPA of 2.0 in core courses taken during the academic year prior to making application to attend the Virtual School. (English, Math, Science, Social Studies)
- d. Maintain appropriate course progression as measured by the completion of weekly assignments, quizzes, and/or tests
- e. Daily access of virtual course content

- f. Be on track for graduation having earned necessary credit in each core area of study – English, Math, Science, and Social Science – and other requisite courses needed for a particular diploma type
- g. Remain a student in good standing of the Dale County School District
- h. Have an adult (legal parent or guardian) willing to serve as the learning coach

Students may be transitioned back to a traditional day program if 1) the student’s participation in the virtual program is impeding the student’s academic progress; 2) the student fails to meet virtual course attendance requirements; or 3) the student repeatedly violates school system policies, procedures, rules or regulations, including, but not limited to, the school system’s rules governing the use of its technology resources.

A dependent of a member of the United States Armed Forces who has received orders to relocate in Alabama shall be considered a resident of Alabama and the school system for purposes of enrolling in and attending the school system’s virtual program.

7.08.3 Monitoring Performance and Testing Requirements – Individual student performance will be monitored pursuant to the school system’s traditional academic credit requirements and grade scale. Students utilizing the virtual school option will be subject to all state testing and accountability requirements and will be subject to the same rules and regulations regarding the administration of such tests that are applicable to students enrolled in the traditional day program.

The Superintendent is hereby authorized to take whatever action may be necessary to facilitate the state testing and accountability requirements applicable to virtual school students. The school system reserves the right to require students utilizing the virtual school option to participate in state testing and accountability requirements on campus at a date and time selected by the school system.

7.08.4 Attendance – Students participating in the virtual school option are required to be active and submitting assignments in order to remain enrolled in the program.

The school system reserves the right to set specific attendance requirements for each virtual course. The Superintendent or his designee is authorized to develop alternate attendance policies for virtual courses, provided that students in such programs are given notice of the attendance requirements. A student’s failure to comply with such requirements may result in administrative action including, but not limited to, probation or removal from the class or a charge of truancy, if appropriate.

7.08.5 Extracurricular Activities – Students must meet the same extracurricular activity eligibility requirements as students enrolled in the traditional day program,

including, but not limited to, any applicable Alabama High School Athletic Association (“AHSAA”) requirements. Student residency for purposes of participating in extracurricular activities will be determined in accordance with applicable state law and AHSAA guidelines.

- 7.08.6 Additional Procedures Authorized –The Superintendent or his designee is authorized to develop such procedures as he deems necessary to implement this policy including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria for courses, methods for informing students and parents of the virtual program’s requirements and rules, and a process for making determinations regarding a student’s continued eligibility.

[Reference : Ala. Code § 16-46A-1, *et. seq.*]

7.09 Career and Technical Education Programs

The Career and Technical Education Program (CTE) consists of areas of study that blend academic, occupational, and life skills. The CTE program will be administered in accordance with the requirements of the Alabama State Department of Education and the board.

- 7.09.1 Work-Based Learning Experience – A work-based learning experience provides students with educational opportunities in a work setting that typically cannot be obtained in a classroom and may include, but is not limited to, cooperative education, internships, clinical experiences, and other related opportunities. The Superintendent is authorized to develop guidelines and procedures in accordance with the regulations of the Alabama State Department of Education for work-based learning experiences to be conducted in the school system, including, but not limited to, guidelines for decision making and protocol for solving problems at the workplace and school.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-6-1-.04]

- 7.09.2 Live Work – Live work consists of work conducted by students that relates to the knowledge and skills taught as part of a CTE program of study but is presented from outside the classroom. The Superintendent is authorized to develop for Board approval guidelines and procedures in accordance with the regulations of the Alabama State Department of Education and any applicable state and/or federal requirements for live work to be conducted in the school system, including, but not limited to, a systematic method for managing live work, work requests and orders, and procedures for approval of where and for whom work may be conducted, school liability, and restrictions on live work. Any money collected for live work will be accounted for in accordance with the Board’s Finance Manual.

- 7.09.3 Safety –To the extent practicable, reasonable safety procedures will be implemented in the Career and Technical Education program in accordance with

Alabama State Department of Education regulations and any applicable state and/or federal requirements.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-6-1-.04]

7.10 *Foreign Exchange Program*

The Superintendent is authorized to develop guidelines and procedures under which foreign exchange students may attend Dale County Schools and Dale County students may participate in foreign exchange programs.

7.11 *Extended Programs: Community Education*

Upon their approval by the Board, the Superintendent is authorized to implement programs and projects designed to meet the needs of the community served by the school system in accordance with any laws or regulations governing such programs.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code 290-080-050]

7.12 *Graduation and Commencement*

In order to obtain an Alabama high school diploma, a student must earn the credits mandated by the applicable Alabama Administrative Code requirements and any additional credits required by the Dale County Board of Education and meet any other requirements mandated by state law or the Alabama State Department of Education.

A student with a disability (as defined by the IDEA) who has met the applicable Alabama Administrative Code requirements and/or any other requirements provided by state or federal law will receive either a diploma or a graduation certificate as appropriate.

A student who has satisfactorily completed one of the above requirements is eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies as a member of the graduating class. Student participation in graduation-related ceremonies will be subject to the principal's approval and may be prohibited by the principal if the student violates disciplinary standards, or if, in the judgment of the principal, the student's participation could lead or contribute to disorder or disruption of the ceremony or activity.

[Reference: Ala. Admin. Code R. §§290-3-1-.02(8); 290-8-9-.10(9)]

7.13 *School Wellness*

In furtherance of its commitment to fostering healthy nutritional and physical activities that support student achievement and that promote the development of lifelong wellness practices, the Board endorses the following programs, practices, and activities:

7.13.1 Nutrition Education and Promotion – Nutrition education that teaches the knowledge, skills, and values needed to develop healthy eating behaviors and nutrition promotion that promotes and reinforces student health will be integrated

into the curriculum and offered throughout school campuses, including school dining areas and classrooms, by appropriately trained personnel.

- 7.13.2 Nutrition Standards and Guidelines – The Board will ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutritional standards established by applicable state and federal regulations. The Board will encourage students to make nutritious food choices and will monitor all food and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside federally regulated child nutrition programs. The Board will consider nutrient density and portion size before permitting food and beverages to be sold or served to students.
- 7.13.3 Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities – The Board will offer physical education opportunities that include the components of a sound physical education program. Physical education will equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to maintain healthful lifelong physical activity. Physical education instruction will be aligned with the curriculum. All students will be provided the opportunity to participate regularly in supervised physical activities that are intended to maintain physical fitness and to impart the benefits of maintaining a physically active and healthy lifestyle.
- 7.13.4 Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness – The Board may implement other programs that help create a school environment that conveys consistent wellness messages and that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.
- 7.13.5 Administrative Implementation – The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement administrative rules and directives that are consistent with this policy and to oversee the implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy based on input from teachers (including specialists in health and physical education), school nurses, parents and guardians, students, representatives of the school food service program, school board members, school administrators, and the public .

The Superintendent will report to the Board, as requested, on programs and efforts that are designed to meet the purpose and intent of this policy and will inform and update the public regarding the content and implementation of the wellness program. The Superintendent will ensure each local schools' compliance with the wellness policy and will measure periodically and make available to the public an assessment of the implementation of the wellness policy, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with the policy, the extent to which the policy compares to model policy and to describe the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy.

7.14 Selection of Instructional Materials and Materials for the School Libraries

7.14.1 Selection – The Superintendent is authorized to develop criteria for selection of materials (other than textbooks) that are used in conjunction with student instruction and for circulation in school libraries.

7.14.2 Objections – The following procedures shall be followed when the appropriateness of books or materials is questioned:

- a. School/community citizens may register their concerns with the principal of the school where material is being challenged.
- b. All concerns shall be presented in writing to the school principal. The statement shall include the following information:
 1. Author, compiler, or editor;
 2. Publisher;
 3. Title;
 4. Reason for objection;
 5. Page number of each item challenged; and,
 6. Signature, address and telephone number of person making criticism.
- c. *School-level reviews:*
 1. A committee of teachers, educational media specialists, parents, and other qualified personnel shall be appointed by the principal to evaluate the challenged materials and to make recommendations for any changes.
 2. The principal shall notify the Superintendent or his/her designee when a committee is convened.
 3. Challenged materials shall not be removed immediately; however, such materials shall not be available for student use pending a final decision.
 4. Challenged materials shall be read and evaluated by the committee, considering the specific objections raised.
 5. The complainant shall be informed in writing concerning the committee's recommendations.

d. *System-level appeals:*

These procedures shall be appropriate for system-level appeals and shall be followed when the complainant disagrees with the decision rendered from the school-level appeal.

1. A committee of teachers, educational media specialists, parents, and other qualified personnel shall be appointed by the Superintendent to review the appeal, to evaluate the challenged materials and to make recommendations of any changes.
2. A committee member shall not be selected from the school where the challenged materials originated.
3. The Superintendent shall designate a member of his/her staff to be responsible for the organization of this review committee according to School Board policies.
4. The committee's review shall be treated objectively and in a business-like manner and shall be conducted in the best interests of students, the schools, and the community. Efforts shall be made to meet with citizens who register concerns to consider their objections.
5. The committee's recommendations shall be submitted to the Superintendent.
6. The complainant shall be informed, in writing, after the committee's recommendation is received by the Superintendent.

An appeal to the School Board may be requested by the complainant when the school and system-level appeals do not satisfactorily resolve the concerns. The School Board shall review recommendations of the school and system-level committees and shall render the final decision on the complainant's concern.

7.15 Parental and Family Engagement

In order to comply with the requirements of section 1116 of Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"), the Board will comply with the following requirements:

- 7.15.1 Joint Development of Required Plans –The school system will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the Board's Title I, Part A plan, and the development of school support and improvement plans as required by the ESSA.
- 7.15.2 Coordination of Activities within the School System –The school system will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the school system in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities

designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance. Such coordination may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

7.15.3 Coordination with Other Laws and Programs – The school system will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs.

7.15.4 Annual Evaluation – The school system will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying—

- a. Barriers to greater participation by parents/families in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background);
- b. The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers; and
- c. Strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

The school system will use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies described in this section.

7.15.5 Involvement of Parents/Family Members – The school system will involve parents in the activities of the schools, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the school system to adequately represent the needs of the population. This advisory board will help develop, revise, and review the parent and family engagement policy.

[Reference: 20 U.S.C.A. § 6318(a)(2)]