



Academic Transparency

School Governing Board Resolution & Policy

WHEREAS, this board is committed to ensuring that all learning materials and activities used at [district] schools meet rigorous expectations of academic quality and political impartiality, and

WHEREAS, it is essential for parents, this governing board, and the [district] community at large to have meaningful access to, and awareness of, the specific learning materials and activities presented to students, and

WHEREAS, nearly half of teachers nationally report spending more than four hours each week developing or selecting their own instructional materials,¹ and

WHEREAS, scholars have concluded that “Ninety-five percent of elementary teachers and 97 percent of secondary teachers have reported using Google to plan instruction” and that 45% of teachers identify YouTube videos as a classroom resource used at least once per week, even as “teachers lack information about these materials’ quality and effectiveness,”² and

WHEREAS, politically divisive, academically discredited materials such as the New York Times *1619 Project*—which has been adopted in over 3,500 classrooms across all 50 states—is “mostly being used as supplemental, optional classroom teaching material” and adopted “by administrative fiat, not through a public textbook review process” or with the approval of school governing boards,³ and

WHEREAS, [district] teachers should be encouraged to supplement classroom instruction with effective educational resources, but also to share with colleagues those materials which are most useful in order to improve their craft and reduce the amount of time new teachers are required to spend redundantly searching for and compiling materials from scratch, and

WHEREAS, educational best practices already call for the documentation of learning materials and activities via lesson plans submitted to principals or other administrators,

BE IT RESOLVED, that [district] will promote collaboration among its educators and parental awareness of the materials and activities used in instruction through the adoption of an academic transparency policy.

¹ Implementation of K–12 State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy. RAND Corporation. 2016.

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1500/RR1529-1/RAND_RR1529-1.pdf

² Digital Instructional Materials. What Are Teachers Using and What Barriers Exist? RAND Corporation. 2020.

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2500/RR2575z17/RAND_RR2575z17.pdf

³ Disputed NY Times '1619 Project' Already Shaping Schoolkids' Minds on Race. RealClearInvestigations. 2020.

https://www.realclearinvestigations.com/articles/2020/01/31/disputed_ny_times_1619_project_is_already_shaping_kids_minds_on_race_bias_12_2192.html



Academic Transparency School Governing Board Policy

A. Each school operated by [the district] shall prominently list on a publicly accessible portion of its website by July 1:

- (1) The learning materials and activities that were used for student instruction at the school during the most recently completed school year, organized at a minimum by subject area and grade.
- (2) The procedures in effect for the documentation, review, or approval of learning materials and activities used for student instruction at the school.

B. For the purposes of this section:

1. Learning materials include, but are not limited to, the following: all textbooks and reading materials, videos, digital materials, websites and other online applications.
2. "Used for student instruction":
 - (a) Means assigned, distributed, or otherwise presented to students in any course for which students receive academic credit or in any educational capacity in which participation of the student body is required by the school or in which a majority of students in a given grade level participate.
 - (b) Applies also to any materials from among which students are required to select one or more, if the available selection is restricted to specific titles.
3. Activities include, but are not limited to assemblies, guest lectures, or other educational events facilitated by school staff, including those conducted by outside individuals or organizations, excluding student presentations.
4. A school shall be required to list only the information necessary to identify the specific learning materials and activities used for instruction, including the title and the author, organization, or internet address associated with each material and activity. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require either:
 - (a) The digital reproduction of the materials themselves, nor
 - (b) The separate reporting of individual components of materials produced as a single volume, except that for digital volumes containing works by multiple authors, the school shall provide either a table of contents or internet address that discloses the discreet works and authors contained within the volume.

C. For each school, the principal or another site administrator designated in writing by the superintendent shall annually report to the superintendent whether the information listed pursuant to paragraph A accurately reflects the learning materials, activities, and procedures employed at the school.

D. The superintendent shall develop a template, subject to approval by the board, to be available for use at each school to report the information required pursuant to paragraph A. The template may, but is not required to, utilize collaborative online document or spreadsheet software that allows multiple authorized users to update or make additions to posted content on an ongoing basis.

E. The listing of materials for each school year shall remain available via the school website until at least the completion of the following year's listing.