



Strengthening Curriculum

The Importance of Simplicity, Clarity, and Priority

Developing a strong conceptual knowledge base is essential for our students' current and future success. **Curriculum must emphasize depth over breadth** to ensure all students are equipped with the 21st century skills necessary for real-world problem-solving and lifelong learning.

MYTH: Streamlining Curriculum Lowers Standards of Student Achievement and Harms Students' Education

Critical Thinking

Covering few topics in more depth helps students to develop richer understanding and higher-order thinking.

(DuFour, 2010)

FACTS

National Trends

A growing body of research suggests that the best national curricula are often the most scaled down.

(Sahm, 2017)

The Science of Learning

Neuroscience confirms that the brain can benefit more from learning if content and the learning environment are aligned.

(Darling-Hammond, 2019)

FACTS

Powerful Evidence

There is a "mountain of evidence" that narrowing the curricular focus has the greatest impact on students' learning, reading ability, and life chances.

(Schmoker, 2023)

21st Century Skills

A coherent, content rich curriculum provides opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in new and creative real-life ways.

(Mehta & Fine, 2019)

FACTS

Assessments for Learning

A focused curricula allows educators to use assessment data to identify areas where students may need additional support.

(McTighe, 2008)



MYTH VS. FACT

What does Policy 109.2
actually require?

MYTH: Policy 109.2 bans books.



VS

FACTS

Policy 109.2...



Requires books to be age appropriate for student readers.



Requires books to be free of sexually explicit content and graphic depictions of explicit sexual content.



Supports diverse reading options for a diverse body of students.



Requires the retention of classical works of literature.



Contains a challenge process if a book is believed to be age inappropriate.



Requires challenged books to remain in circulation during the challenge process.



Involves a committee of district teachers and administrators to determine the final status of each challenged book.



Requires any book deemed age-inappropriate to be replaced with a book from the same genre and intended for the same audience of readers.





What does Policy 321 say?

Policy 321 requires classrooms to be non-partisan and neutral with respect to political and socio-political topics.

KEY TERMS

- 1. NON-PARTISAN** Impartial or neutral with respect to political, religious, or other controversial societal issues.
- 2. NEUTRAL** Unbiased and not showing favoritism towards any particular group, individual, or ideology
- 3. SOCIO-POLITICAL** Social and political aspects of a society or a community, how they interconnect, and how they influence how society functions.

Policy 321 requires us to...

- ▶ Refrain from promoting or advocating for any particular political party, ideology, or belief system in classrooms or in any other professional setting.
- ▶ Provide an environment that encourages students' expression of diverse opinions and beliefs in a respectful and constructive manner.
- ▶ Teach students how to develop, articulate and defend their own thoughts while respecting others' thoughts.
- ▶ Remain objective and non-partisan in all interactions with students, colleagues, and members of the public within the capacity of a district employee.

Read Policy 321

