Athens Area Schools

Curriculum Plan

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Created 2011

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It is recognized by Athens Area Schools that a guaranteed and viable curriculum (*Robert Marzano)* is essential for students to achieve success in learning. Opportunity to learn is a key ingredient in the success of the student. Without this opportunity to learn and exposure to the general education curriculum, a student cannot learn the material. A viable curriculum is one in which the content can be reasonably taught during a course or during the school year. If the content cannot be taught successfully during the time allotted, it is not a viable curriculum. The guaranteed curriculum is one in which a student will be given the opportunity to learn the content no matter who his or her teacher is.

Here at Athens Area Schools we are committed and dedicated to provide every student with the opportunity to learn the intended curriculum.

Methodology

- *Alignment*
  The curriculum of Athens Area Schools is aligned with the Common Core State Standards in Reading and Math. This alignment occurred this year. The rest of the subject areas are aligned with the Michigan Benchmarks, Grade Level Content Standards and the High School Course Content Standards.

- *Professional Learning Communities*
  Professional Learning Communities serve as a very important part of curriculum design and implementation. These Professional Learning Communities work on pacing guides, common lessons and assessments, and in looking at data to improve instruction. These professional learning communities participate in active research and in curriculum assessment and development.

- *Parental Involvement*
  Parents are invited and encouraged to participate on curriculum decisions and evaluation of the curriculum.

- *Material Adoption*
  Materials that are considered for adoption are researched for best practices, reviewed by stakeholders and approved by the school board. These decisions are not top-down decisions, but approved by stakeholders before being approved by the administration and school board.

- *Technology*
  Technology is an extremely important part of the Athens Area Schools Curriculum. All students have access to the internet. We make use of Accelerated Reader, the Star Reading Test, RAZ Kids, Study Island and other programs that embed technology into the curriculum. Credit recovery classes make use of on-line learning, and other additional classes are offered through on-line learning. In addition to the curriculum uses of technology, we use organizational software including file management, book

keeping, student management, student grades, etc. We use data director and other programs to organize and make sense of out assessment data to work on school improvement. Communication is carried on through technology so that parents and students have access to how the student is responding in the curriculum.

- ***RTI (Response to Intervention)***
  Although almost all students have access to the general education curriculum, it is recognized that not all students learn at the same rate or in the same way. Therefore it is important to monitor every student's progress in the general curriculum and to use interventions and modifications to help every child be successful in learning the curriculum. Differentiated instruction is also very important. At times, a student may also receive additional instruction in a content area to enable him/her to be successful.

- ***Professional Development***
  Staff professional development is an important part of implementation of the Athens Area Schools Curriculum. All professional development is based on the school improvement plan and the individual and collective needs of the staff. Successful professional development is ongoing and provides opportunities for staff to implement the learning gained into the classroom. Meaningful professional development includes accountability and sharing with other staff members what has been learned. Professional development is a key ingredient to have an attained curriculum.

- ***Periodic Evaluation***
  Annually, the stakeholders of Athens Area Schools will review the intended curriculum. This review will be data driven and place a high emphasis on student learning. This evaluation will take place in conjunction with the school improvement process. In addition to this evaluation, materials used to teach the curriculum will also be reviewed. This review will also consist of stakeholders. During this evaluation process, the district will determine if the intended curriculum is also the implemented curriculum (What was actually taught). Finally, the district will determine if this implemented curriculum is also the attained curriculum (What students actually learned). (*Robert Marzano*)

English Language Arts—Reading

- ***Benchmarks***
  The English Language Arts Curriculum is based on and aligned with the Common Cores State Standards. The Grade Level Content Standards (GLECs) can also be used to provide further detail.

- ***Four Block Framework***
  The Four Block Framework is used in the elementary grades to teach English Language Arts. This framework provides a guided reading block, a self-selected reading block, a working with words block and a writing block.

- ***Phonics and Whole Language***
  Reading is taught with a mixture of Phonics and Whole Language. Any materials used to teach the curriculum must make use of both approaches.

- ***Materials***
  Trade books, YAZ Kids (a web based program), Orton Gillingham phonics program, Accelerated Reader (a web based program), A to Z Reader, Explode the Code, a basal, the Star Reading test (a web based program), Study Island, etc.

- ***Integration of Technology***
  The curriculum makes use of many web-based materials such as YAZ Kids, Accelerated Reader, the Star Reading test, and Study Island. In addition, students use the internet to access information, do research and for producing products.

- ***Interventions***
  Title interventions are provided in addition to the regular classroom interventions. These include additional reading instruction provided by the Title I teacher and assistance through paraprofessionals. Before and after-school tutoring is also provided. At the high school level, credit recovery is available.

- ***Assessment***
  DIBELS assessments are provided for every early elementary students. The Star Reading Test is given 3 times a year and in addition, Accelerated Reader is used to assess students on reading comprehension. The MEAP, MME and Study Island are used for older students. Summative and formative assessments are used throughout the curriculum. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Writing

- ***Benchmarks***
  The Common Core State Standards are the primary benchmarks. The Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Course Content Standards will be used to further define the curriculum.

- ***Writing across the curriculum***
  Writing is directly related to learning. It is important that all students write in every subject across the curriculum. This emphases the importance of writing and allows the student to react to the curriculum. Formative and summative writing assessments also assist the instructor in designing lessons in the curriculum.

- ***Writing to learn***
  Writing to learn is implemented in every subject and grade level. Writing about the material covered forces the student to think about the material. Developing students who think and interact with the curriculum is one of the goals of Athens Area Schools.

- ***The John Collins Writing Program***
  The John Collins Writing Program is used K-12 and has provided us with a common framework and consistency throughout the grade levels. On-going professional development was implemented so that all staff had the necessary training. The program involves writing to learn and writing across the curriculum. It focuses on the various types of writing and uses focus correction areas to guide instruction.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Technology is used throughout the writing curriculum in that students have access to the internet for research, access to word processing programs and on-line learning opportunities through Moodle and other on-line courses.

- *Interventions*
  In addition to the classroom interventions, Title services include instruction from the Title teacher, assistance through title paraprofessionals and before and after-school tutoring. At the high school level, credit recovery is available.

- *Assessment*
  Common grade level assessments are being developed by the Professional Learning Communities. Focus correction areas have been identified for each grade level and are assessed through summative and formative assessments. In addition, the 4th and 7th grade MEAP and the MME provide some information on the overall success of the program.

Math

- *Benchmarks*
  The Common Core State Standards are the primary benchmarks. The Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Course Content Standards will be used to further define the curriculum.

- *Everyday Math Program K-6*
  The Everyday Math Program is used in the elementary grades. This researched-based program allows the student to develop both conceptual and procedural skills.

- *Secondary Programs*
  Transition Math is used in seventh grade to provide for a smooth transition to the high school courses taught in grades eight through twelfth. Algebra I and II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus and Personal Finance are all available at the high school. In addition, the student has access to many on-line math classes.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Technology is integrated through the use of calculators and graphing calculators. There are also numerous on-line programs that are used to develop math skills. Study Island and on-line courses are used in sixth grade through twelfth grade.

- *Interventions*
  In addition to the classroom interventions, Title services include instruction from the Title teacher, assistance through title paraprofessionals and before and after-school tutoring. At the high school level, credit recovery is available.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. These are also provided in the Everyday Math program for grades kindergarten through sixth

grades. Study Island is used to assess older students. The MEAP and MME also provide data to evaluate the success of the curriculum. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Science

- *Benchmarks*
  The Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Course Content Standards are the main benchmarks.

- *Battle Creek Math and Science Center Program K-6*
  Our science curriculum for kindergarten through sixth grade is supplied by the Battle Creek Math and Science Center. These quarterly science kits are aligned with the Michigan Benchmarks and come complete with assessments.

- *Secondary Programs*
  Earth Science, Chemistry I & II, Physics I & II, Biology I & II, Anatomy & Physiology, Aviation, Bioethics, Ecology, and Physical Science are all offered at the secondary level. In addition, students may take on-line classes.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Students have access to the internet and to the appropriate technology related to the field of study.

- *Interventions*
  Students have access to before and after-school tutoring in addition to the regular classroom interventions. Credit recovery is available for secondary students.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. End of Kit Tests are used kindergarten through sixth grades. Study Island is used to assess older students. The MEAP and MME also provide data to evaluate the success of the curriculum. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Social Studies

- *Benchmarks*
  The Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Course Content Standards are the main benchmarks.

- *CISD Social Studies on line Curriculum K-8*
  The Calhoun Intermediate School District (CISD) has developed an on-line curriculum for kindergarten through eight grades. This curriculum is aligned with Michigan standards and makes the curriculum uniform throughout the region.

- *Secondary Programs*
  Civics, U. S. History, World History, Government, Criminal Law, Current Events, Local History, Sociology, Psychology, Youth in Government, and History through Film are offered in the high school.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Students have access to the internet for research. We have participated in an initiative to use historical documents and primary sources in the learning of history and government. Students use technology to produce products and reports as well.

- *Interventions*
  Students have access to before and after-school tutoring in addition to the regular classroom interventions. Credit recovery is available for secondary students.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. Study Island is used to assess older students. The MEAP and MME also provide data to evaluate the success of the curriculum. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Physical Education and Health

- *Benchmarks*
  The Grade Level Content Expectations and High School Course Content Standards are the main benchmarks.

- *Physical Education*
  Physical Education is provided for students in kindergarten through high school. Courses available in the high school are Physical Education & Health I, Physical Education II and Strength and Conditioning.

- *Health*
  Health is taught as part of the Physical Education I class which all students must take.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Students have access to the internet and to the appropriate technology related to the field of study.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Technology

- *Benchmarks*
  The Michigan Technology Standards are the main benchmarks.

- *Technology*
  The technology curriculum is taught during specific computer lab times and in the regular classroom. This curriculum deals with everything from word processing to e-mail to creating websites. Technology is incorporated into all other subjects.

- *Interventions*
  Interventions are made available as needed.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. Students must demonstrate that they can successfully use the various categories of technology. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Performing Arts

- *Benchmarks*
  The Michigan Benchmarks and High School Course Content Standards are the main benchmarks.

- *Music*
  Vocal Music is taught in grades first through sixth.

- *Band*
  Band is offered for students in the fifth through twelfth grades.

- *Choir*
  Choir is offered after school for students in the third through twelfth grades.

- *Visual Arts*
  Art instruction in the elementary is conducted by the general education teacher. At the secondary level, courses are offered including: Introduction to Art, Advanced Art, Multi Media, Ceramics and Theater.

- *Integration of Technology*
  Students have access to the internet and to the appropriate technology related to the field of study.

- *Assessment*
  Various formative and summative assessments are used in the classrooms. End of course assessments are used at the high school level.

Special Education

- *Exposure to General Education Curriculum*
  Every attempt is made to ensure that all students have access to and can succeed with the general education curriculum.

- ***Alternative Curriculum and Certificate of Achievement***
  A small minority of students who receive special education services are unable because of the severity of their disability to be successful with the general education curriculum. These students are provided with an alternative curriculum that focuses on the skills that the student will need in order to be a productive member of society. If these students are successful with the alternative curriculum, they are awarded a Certificate of Achievement instead of a diploma.

- ***Integration of Technology***
  Students have the same access to technology as those students who are exclusively in the general education setting. In some cases, depending on the disability, students have access to assistive technology to enable them to be successful with the curriculum.

- ***Assessment***
  The CIMS2 (Continuous Improvement Monitoring System) is used to evaluate the effectiveness of special education programs.

Sex Education

- ***Alignment with the law***
  The Athens Area Schools Sex Education Curriculum is aligned with Michigan law and promotes abstinence as the only certain and best way to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

- ***Goals***
  1. Provide information on anatomy and maturation.
  2. Support the parents in educating their child(ren) on these issues.
  3. Provide information on communicable diseases and how to prevent their spread.
  4. Prevent teen pregnancies.
  5. Prevent STDs.
  6. Promote abstinence as the only certain way to avoid STDs and pregnancies.

- ***Summary of the Program***
  Fourth Grade**:**
  Movie: "*Boy to Man"* shown to the boys only
  Movie: "*Girl to Woman"* shown to the girls only
  Any information not included in the movies is not discussed with the students. They are told to go ask their parents about anything not mentioned that they have questions about. Students are encouraged to discuss all of the topics covered with their parents and strongly discouraged from discussing it with peers.
  Fifth Grade**:**
  - As required by law, students are taught about HIV-AIDS and Hepatitis.
  - Students are taught to be accepting of others who have contracted these diseases.
  - Information presented includes facts about the disease, how it is spread, diagnosis, potential complications, treatment, and symptoms.
  - Abstinence is taught as the only 100% effective way against unplanned pregnancy,

sexually transmitted diseases, and sexually transmitted HIV infection and AIDS.
- Students are taught the best methods for the restriction and prevention of these diseases.
- Students are encouraged to discuss the topics covered with their parents.

<u>Seventh and Eight Grades</u>**:**
- Power Point presentation entitled: "*Holistic Sexuality"*
- Abstinence is taught as the only 100% effective way against unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexually transmitted HIV infection and AIDS.
- HIV-AIDS and other communicable diseases are taught through this presentation.
- Students are taught to be accepting of others who have contracted these diseases.
- Students are encouraged to discuss the topics covered with their parents.

- ***Integration of Technology***
  Technology is a vital part of the Athens Area Schools Sex Education Curriculum. It is used to teach the program. Because of filtering, students are not able to access information on line. However, the Athens Area Schools Sex Education Curriculum is posted on the website and available for parental review.

- ***Assessment***
  An assessment of the effectiveness of the Athens Area Schools Sex Education Curriculum will take place at least once every two years and a report of that assessment will be presented to the board of education and the public.