

## INSTRUCTION – PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

We believe that each student should develop to his or her full potential through learning. We believe that all students share common characteristics in educational needs and that each student has unique characteristics, learning styles and needs. We provide a common core of basic learning for all, a set of exploratory learning to guide students in selecting specialties, and an array of elective learning to match the distinctive needs of each student.

Our central responsibility is to provide basic learning opportunities for the youth of our community. We also believe that ISD #31 should provide for the learning, civic, social and recreational needs of our patrons. We provide a community education program designed to respond to the needs of a diverse public.

We have developed the following learning priorities and program emphases which reflect the values and traditions of the community.

### A. Characteristics of a Good Curriculum

A good curriculum is more than a collection of subject fields and specific courses. It is dynamic and able to meet the needs of society. A core of central beliefs permeates all subjects and courses in the curriculum. We believe the curriculum must focus on basic skills, intellectual development, mental and physical health and preparation for a career.

#### 1. Basic Skills

We believe that the basic skills provide a foundation for all other learning. A student must know the fundamental principles of mathematics, be able to compute accurately, read with understanding, write legibly and correctly, and speak effectively. We believe that some areas deserve emphasis at the expense of others. The basic skills are essential and the understanding of and participation in the fine and practical arts are desirable.

#### 2. Intellectual Development

We believe that each student should learn to think logically and to organize facts, ideas, and things into categories. Each student should learn to think critically, select information, see patterns, make generalizations, and evaluate results. Each student should also learn to follow both oral and written directions and use good study habits.

#### 3. Mental and Physical Health

We believe that each student should develop essential attributes of mental health, should learn and practice good physical health habits, and should regularly engage in activities to maintain physical fitness. General physical health and fitness is more important than skills in specific sports.

#### 4. Career Preparation

We believe that a students should be familiar with the world of work, should have a thorough understanding of his or her own interests, abilities and special talents, and

should, if desired, leave school with a tentative career plan. A favorable attitude toward work and some specific job skills is essential.

5. Good Citizenship and Character Development

We believe we share the need to help students develop: (1) self-understanding, (2) personal values, (3) a pattern of ethical behavior, (4) an understanding of economic systems, including the ability to manage a personal budget, (5) skills for maintaining a home, (6) an appreciation of the arts, (7) a balance life pattern between work and leisure, (8) a regard for the environment, and (9) an understanding of the following ideas of respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness and good citizenship.

We believe that a large part of public education is the development of good citizens. We recognize that families, the community, youth organizations, service clubs, churches and other religious organizations are important assets in character development. It is our intention to work in cooperation with them to produce a viable healthy community.

Furthermore, we believe that life in a democratic society offers citizens the best possible opportunities for productivity, achievement, and happiness. Accordingly, we not only educate our students to believe in and appreciate democracy, to know its origins, to understand its principles, and to make it work; but we also educate our students to be aware of, understand and develop an appreciation for the rich cultural diversity that has made our country great.

Finally, we believe that in today's complex world it is essential for our students to develop an understanding of the cultures of other nations. Accordingly, we educate our students to know the origins of other cultures and to understand the principles upon which they were founded.

B. Characteristics of a Good School

As parents are ultimately responsible for their children's education and we recognize the school's major role in student's intellectual development; it is essential that we cooperate with the parents and enlist their involvement in that education to enhance the quality of education for each individual student.

A good school is impossible without (1) a proper atmosphere for learning, (2) high academic standards, and (3) quality teachers, administrators, and Board of Education members and (4) education without discrimination.

1. A Proper Atmosphere for Learning

We believe that learning occurs best in an atmosphere of emotional and physical security. It is our obligation to provide such an atmosphere for each student by setting standards for the conduct of all students. Moreover, we believe that successful adulthood requires responsible behavior that does not threaten the emotional or physical security of others, and that we should prepare students for that characteristic of adult life.

2. High Academic Standards

Because high expectations and high academic standards correlate with increased learning, we believe that such standards should be established and maintained for each grade and course for promotion from grade to grade, and for graduation from high school.

Furthermore, we should expect, and assist all students to meet or exceed the standards to the extent it is reasonable to do so.

3. Good Teachers, Administrators, and Board of Education

We believe that teachers, administrators, and members of the Board of Education must be qualified in experience and/or education, and competent in performance. Moreover, those who serve the educational enterprise should be understanding and helpful in all their dealings with students, members of the community, and each other. Further, administrators and the Board of Education should provide leadership to all aspects of school operations.

4. Education Without Discrimination

We recognize that Independent School District No. 31 operates within the requirements set forth in the federal and state constitutions and in federal and state legislative, executive, and judicial actions.

Central among these requirements is that each individual must be educated irrespective of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, native language, and mental, emotional, or physical capacity. We gladly meet the letter of these requirements because we are in full accord with their spirit.