

West Jefferson School District Policy Manual

Chapter 1 - Philosophy

Table of Contents

SERIES 100

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

[100 Forward](#)

[101 Philosophy of Education](#)

[101.1 Mission Statement and Beliefs of West Jefferson School District](#)

[102 Code of Ethics - Board of Trustee's](#)

100 Forward

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

This handbook of "Policies, Rules and Regulations" is published to serve as a guide to the People of this School District in carrying out and understanding the policies of the Board of Trustees and the School Laws of Idaho. It is hoped that an understanding of these policies will promote a better understanding and eliminate inconsistencies.

101 Philosophy of Education

Universal opportunity for public education is America's response to a moral principle that every person should have opportunity to develop their full potential. American democracy presupposes an informed and responsible people. Government can remain the people's servant only when the people fulfill the political responsibilities which make possible the expression of their will. Intelligent fulfillment of these responsibilities is impossible for an uneducated people.

The American Public School is an indispensable source of national unity, common purpose, and equality of opportunity. The defense and perpetuation of democracy requires an educated

citizenry. Therefore, the American system of free public education, enhanced by the traditional separation of church and state, is essential for our democratic way of life.

Education is a process of acquiring the knowledge, skills and standards of culture, and of learning to contribute to that culture. The public elementary and secondary school is but one of the many institutions in the United States engaged in education. The roles of home, church and community are basic. The primary responsibility, however, for the secular education of most Americans rests with the public schools.

The best education is that which does most to enable each student to develop his or her abilities and to serve society. Education must, therefore, be appropriate to the needs of each pupil and to the needs of society.

All schools of West Jefferson School District #253 will provide students the opportunity to develop essential skills in communication, citizenship, and basic values. The teaching and demonstrating of these skills will be exemplified throughout the pre-school - twelfth grade system.

Age-appropriate classroom, school, and community activities will be provided to all students for the purpose of developing written and oral communication skills with individuals and groups. Good listening skills are a critical component for the communication process.

The teaching of basic values such as honesty, self-discipline, unselfishness, respect for authority and the central importance of work will provide students the necessary foundation to be responsible citizens in their homes, schools, communities, state, and nation.

All students will be provided the opportunity to develop their academic skills (i.e. Reading, Language Arts and Communication, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies) and to develop the skills necessary for entering the workforce, including management skills (i.e. ability to plan, self-discipline, respect for authority, ongoing skill improvement), individual and teamwork skills (i.e. personal initiative, working with others), thinking/information skills (i.e. reasoning, problem solving, acquiring and using information) and vocational-technical skills based on the standards of the industry as approved by the State Board of Vocational Education. Included in the Vocational-Technical curriculum would be homemaking skills (i.e. nutrition, child development, resource management); balancing work and family responsibilities; and entrepreneurial skills.

Work-based learning experiences may be provided as part of the instruction in the secondary schools. These programs will be reviewed and approved by the local Board of Trustees.

To secure the greatest value in the limited time available, it is expected that each teacher shall direct the students' program toward these ends and shall be in charge of the classroom and directing the students' activities at all times. Parent approved student learning plans will be provided for all students in grades 8-12.

The general objectives of education may be listed under the following categories: (1) The objectives of self-realization; (2) The objectives of human relations; (3) The objective of economic efficiency and (4) The objectives of civic responsibility.

Legal references: IDAPA 08.02.03-200; IDAPA 08.02.03-400; IDAPA 08.02.03-500; IDAPA 08.02.03-700

Policy History:

Adopted on: September 11, 1997

Revised on: December 11, 2003

101.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission and beliefs of West Jefferson School District #253 shall be developed cooperatively between the staff and school board. It shall be reviewed yearly with all staff and revised as necessary.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a quality education for all students and assist each in developing the academic, technical, social, and civic skills and values necessary for success in post-secondary education and employment.

Beliefs

1. Student learning is the chief priority of our schools. We believe all students can learn.
2. Learning is a lifetime process.
3. Our schools provide a positive, safe, respectful environment in both academic and extra-curricular activities.
4. Each student is valued as an individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
5. All students have the responsibility to maximize their educational experience.
6. Basic skills mastery is the top priority; however, the curriculum should also include opportunities for students to explore their interests.
7. A variety of instructional approaches are provided to accommodate different learning styles and support student learning.
8. Students must demonstrate their understanding of essential knowledge and skills and be actively involved in problem solving and the production of quality work.
9. Teachers, staff, administrators, students, parents, and community members share responsibility

for advancing the school's mission, and each must hold high expectations for student achievement.

Policy History:

Adopted on: December 11, 2003

Revised on: September, 2003

Revised on: May 13, 2010

102 CODE OF ETHICS - BOARD OF TRUSTEE'S

CODE OF ETHICS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

As a member of the West Jefferson School District NO. 253 Board of Trustees, I will strive to improve public education and student achievement, and to that end will:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled Board Meetings insofar as possible, having read my packet ensuring that I am informed about the issues to be considered at the meeting;
2. Recognize that the Board must comply with the Open Meeting Law and only has authority to make decisions at official Board meetings;
3. Make all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
4. Understand that the Board makes decisions as a team. Individual board members may not commit the Board to any action unless so authorized by official board action;
5. Recognize that decisions are made by a majority vote and the outcome should be supported by all board members;
6. Acknowledge that policy decisions are a primary function of the Board and should be made after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings, recognize that authority to administer policy rests with the superintendent;
7. Be open, fair and honest with no hidden agendas, and respect the right of other board members to have opinions and ideas which differ from mine;
8. Recognize that the superintendent is the Board's advisor and should be present at all meetings, except when considering the Superintendent's evaluation, contract, or salary;
9. Understand the chain of command and refer problems or complaints to the proper administrative office while refraining from communications that could create conditions of bias if such complaints or problems ever rise to the attention of the Board as a hearing panel;

10. Keep abreast of important developments in educational trends, research, and practices through individual study and participation in programs such as those sponsored by the Idaho National School Boards Associations;

11. Respect the right of the public to be informed about District decisions and school operations;

12. Give staff the respect and consideration due skilled, professional employees and support the employment of those best qualified to serve as District Staff, while insisting on regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;

13. Present personal criticism of District operations to the Superintendent, not to District staff or at a Board meeting;

14. Refuse to use my board position for personal or family gain or prestige. I will announce any conflicts of interest before board action is taken;

15. Understand that I will receive information that is confidential and cannot be shared;

16. Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending public schools.

Policy History:

Adopted on: June 12, 2008