

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IF - INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH**

It is the policy of the Board that instruction will be aligned with the goals and mission of the School District, and the rules of the NH Department of Education.

Instruction will be focused on meeting the instructional needs of students with different talents, interests, and development.

The instructional program will include:

1. Procedures for diagnosing learner needs
2. Methods and strategies for teaching that incorporate learner needs
3. Resource-based learning opportunities
4. Techniques for the evaluation of student outcomes
5. The provision of remedial instruction as needed

All instruction will reflect the acknowledgment of diversity and respect for differences

Instruction will also include, where possible, consideration of all available community resources, including but not limited to organizations, businesses, talented individuals, natural resources, and technology to engage each student in achieving the necessary skill and knowledge.

Students will be encouraged to participate in year-round learning.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04(a)(6), (j), (k)(4-6), Policy Development*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.06, Culture and Climate*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.14(h), Summer Learning*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.27(b)(3), High School Curriculum, Credits, Graduation Requirements, and Co-curricular Program*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 1008**

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

On-going curriculum review, revision, and development provide strategic and purposeful approaches to preparing students for success in an increasingly complex and unpredictable world. The process of curriculum development is collaborative, encompassing contributions from the total community — teachers, administrators, school board members, parents, and content area specialists.

The board encourages and supports the professional staff in its efforts to identify learner needs, investigate new curricular ideas, develop and improve programs, and evaluate results.

The superintendent will maintain a systemic approach to curriculum review, revision, and development for the school district. The superintendent or designee will establish curriculum committees for the study of curriculum improvements, including the selection of new instructional materials and approaches, as found necessary and desirable.

The board will make final decisions on curriculum change. The superintendent will submit to the board recommendations based upon the proposals developed by the curriculum committees and the professional staff for the board's consideration and adoption. The financial and programmatic implications of recommended curricular changes shall be made known to the board in a timely manner that will allow board approval and budgetary support for achieving the goals of the proposed curriculum.

Teachers have professional obligations to the school's educational programs beyond regular classroom duties, and these obligations may include work on curriculum committees. Teachers are expected to make contributions to the review, revision, and development of the district's curriculum.

*Regulatory References:*

*Ed. 302.01 (f)*

*Ed. 303.01 (g)*

*PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED 11-24-80 (as Policy 6220)*

ADOPTED: : May 6, 2002

**CURRICULUM ADOPTION**

It is the policy of the board that no basic course of study shall be eliminated or new courses added without approval of the board, nor shall any significant alteration or reduction of a course of study be made without such approval.

New programs and courses of study shall not be acted upon by the board until the meeting following their presentation by the administration so that board members may have opportunity to review the proposed program.

*Regulatory References:*

*Ed. 302.01 (f)*

*Ed. 303.01 (g)*

ADOPTED: April 1, 2002

## AMHERST Policy

### IHAK - CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Those in charge of curriculum development will have the responsibility for integrating into the curriculum, as appropriate, the following principles:

1. Each individual has dignity and worth.
2. A free society requires respect for persons, property, and principles, and for self.
3. Each individual has a right to learn and freedom to achieve.
4. Each individual, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, ethnic background, or economic status, has the right to equal opportunity.
5. Each individual has the right to personal liberties.
6. Each individual is responsible for his/her own actions, and should exercise self-discipline where and when appropriate.
7. Each individual has a responsibility to the group as well as to the total society.
8. A democratic government is established by majority vote.
9. Democratic societies are based on law.
10. Problems are solved through reason and orderly processes.
11. An individual should be tolerant of another's beliefs and should have freedom to express his/her own.
12. Each individual has the right to work, to pursue an occupation, and to gain satisfaction from personal efforts.

Teaching in the area of character and citizenship will take place throughout the K-12 program.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*RSA 186:13, II, Americanization*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306:04(a) (5), Policy Development*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306:06, Culture & Climate*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306:04 (i), Character and Citizenship*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## AMHERST POLICY

### **IHBAA - Student Evaluations Specific Learning Disability**

It shall be the policy of the Amherst school district to evaluate students suspected of having a specific learning disability in a manner consistent with the procedures and standards included in the attached form entitled, "Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Process."

"Specific Learning Disability Evaluation Procedures" will be utilized to determine the existence of a specific learning disability using multiple sources of data to identify a child's pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, intellectual development, and or state approved grade-level standards. A specific learning disability is determined through professional judgment using multiple supporting evidences. The manner in which a student responds to instruction and interventions will also be considered in the determination of eligibility as a child with a specific learning disability.

#### Legal References

*20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(6) (2004) 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.8(a)(10), 300.307-300.311 (2006) RSA 186-C:16 NH Code of Administrative Rules, Ed 1106.01 (b), (d)-(e)1107.01(a), 1107.02, 1107.04(a)-(b), Table 1100.1 (2008)*

Adopted December 3, 2009

SAU 39

LEARNING DISABILITY ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

LEA:

Amherst \_\_\_\_\_
Mont Vernon \_\_\_\_\_
Souhegan \_\_\_\_\_
School Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

The following eligibility process is intended to guide the IEP Team through the required compliance components of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, New Hampshire RSA 186-C, and the New Hampshire Rules for Special Education in making decisions relative to student eligibility in special education under the category of specific learning disability.

Specific Learning Disability Definition:

Pursuant to NH Ed 1102.01, a specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

Required IEP Team Composition:

To make the determination of a specific learning disability, the team must have the following representation:

LEA Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

- 1. Parent/legal guardian/surrogate parents/adult student;
2. Child's regular teacher or regular classroom teacher qualified to teach child of his/her age;
3. Person(s) qualified to conduct individual diagnostic evaluations of children;
4. Person certified in Specific Learning Disabilities; and
5. LEA Representative.

Eligibility Questions – Answer All Of Them

Table with 3 columns: Question, YES, NO. Row 1: 1. Is there a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes? Row 2: Required Assessment: Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ List Assessment Findings:

To be eligible, the answer to Question 1 must be yes. Proceed to next question.

<b>2. Is the student failing to achieve adequately for the student’s age or to meet State-approved grade level standards in any of the areas below, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student’s age or State approved grade level standards?</b>	YES	NO
<b>Required Assessment: Academic Achievement _____ by _____ on _____</b> <b>If so, identify the area(s):</b>  ___ oral expression                                    ___ reading fluency skills ___ listening comprehension                    ___ reading comprehension ___ written expression                            ___ mathematics calculation ___ basic reading skill                            ___ mathematics problem solving  <b>List assessments/findings:</b>  		

*To be eligible, the answer to Question 2 must be yes. Proceed to next question.*

<b>3. Does the student exhibit a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the IEP team to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments?</b>	YES	NO	N/A
<b>Verification:</b>  			

*To be eligible, the answer must be yes to either Question 3 or 4 must be yes. Proceed to question 5.*

<b>4. Has the student failed to make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade level standards in one or more of the areas identified in Question 2 when using a process based on the student’s response to scientific, research based intervention (RTI)?</b>	YES	NO	N/A
<b>Required Evidence/Verification:</b>  <b>1. Instructional strategies used</b>  <b>2. Student-centered data collected</b>  <b>3. Parent notification about strategies used and right to request an evaluation</b>			

*To be eligible, the answer must be yes to either Question 3 or 4 must be yes. Proceed to question 5.*

<b>5. Is the underachievement due to the lack of appropriate instruction in math or reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension)?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<i>In making this determination, the Team must consider:</i> a) Data that demonstrates that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; <u>and</u> b) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child's parents.		
<b>Verification:</b>		

*To be eligible, the answer to Question 5 must be no. Proceed to next question.*

<b>6. Is the student's lack of achievement primarily the result of:</b>		
<b>a. Visual, Hearing or Motor Disability</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Required Assessments: Vision</b> _____ <b>by</b> _____ <b>on</b> _____ <b>Hearing</b> _____ <b>by</b> _____ <b>on</b> _____ <b>Verification:</b>		
<b>b. Mental Retardation</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Verification:</b>		
<b>c. Emotional Disturbance</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Verification:</b>		
<b>d. Environmental, Cultural or Economic Disadvantage and/or Limited English Proficiency?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Verification:</b>		

*To be eligible, the answer to all of Question 6 must be no. Proceed to next question.*

<b>7. Relevant behavior noted during the observation(s) and its relationship to academic functioning:</b>
<b>Required Assessment: Classroom Observation</b> _____ <b>by</b> _____ <b>on</b> _____
<i>The child must be observed in learning environment (including the regular classroom setting) to document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.</i>

<b>8. Educationally relevant medical findings:</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If yes, specify:</b>		

<b>9. Consistent with Ed 1107.04, are the evaluations utilized valid, reliable and performed by qualified individuals?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
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**Eligibility Conclusions:**

<b>1. Does a specific learning disability exist?</b> <i>To be eligible, answers to questions 1, 2, and 3 must each be “Yes,” and the answers to questions 4 and 5 must each be “No.”</i>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Summarize basis for decision:</b>		

*To be eligible, the answer to Question 1 must be yes. Proceed to Question 2.*

<b>2. If there is a specific learning disability, does the child require special education and related services because of that disability?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Verification:</b>		

*If the answers to questions 1 and 2 are “yes,” the student qualifies as a child with a specific learning disability. If the answer to either question is “no,” then the student is ineligible under this identification.. Team members should certify their agreement or disagreement by signing below.*

**I certify that this report reflects my conclusions:**

<b>NAME and TITLE:</b>	<b>NAME and TITLE:</b>

**I certify that this report does not reflect my conclusion.**

<b>NAME and TITLE:</b>	<b>NAME and TITLE:</b>

**Dissenting members shall submit a separate statement.**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IHBBA - LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY INSTRUCTION**

If the District receives federal funding for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Programs, the following will be provided:

1. Parents will be notified of their student's placement in a language program and their options associated with that placement. Notification will include the reasons for identifying the child as LEP and the reasons for placing the child in the specific program.
2. Students will participate in regular assessments in a manner that will yield an accurate assessment. Test waivers may be granted on a case-by-case basis for LEP students who demonstrate unusual and unique circumstances; however, students who have been educated in the United States for three years are required to participate in reading/language arts assessment in English.
3. Certification that teachers in the program are fluent in English as well as other languages used in instruction (if the district receives sub-grants).
4. Evaluation of the program and the academic success and language achievement of the students in the program. Parents will be notified of:
  - A. Their child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed.
  - B. The status of their child's academic achievement.
  - C. The method of instruction used in the program in which the child is placed, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs.
  - D. Information as to how the program will meet their child's educational strengths, assist him/her to learn English, and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards.
  - E. Exit requirements for the program.
  - F. If the child has a disability, a statement as to how the LEP will meet objectives of the child's IEP.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*P.L. 107-110, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

**HOME EDUCATION - PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

It is the policy of the Amherst School Board to comply with the provisions of RSA 193:1-C by providing access to curricular courses and cocurricular programs to Amherst residents who are home educated in Grades K-8 and Mont Vernon residents who are educated in Grades 7 and 8.

All requests for participation in school programs by parents of home educated students must be in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.

It is the parents' responsibility to arrange *and provide* transportation to and from the schools for home educated students who participate in school activities.

Statutory Reference:

RSA 193

ADOPTED: April 13, 2004

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IHCA - SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

The Board recognizes that student learning is an ongoing process and that it is important for students to engage in learning activities even when not attending school. Therefore, the Board encourages students to have a plan for summer activities that support student learning. Such activities may include a summer book-reading list, attending an education-themed summer camp, engaging in extended learning opportunities, or other activities that support student learning.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules Section Ed. 306:14(h), Instructional Program;  
Summer Activities That Support Student Learning*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IJO - COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

The Board encourages the use of community resources and citizens to assist in furthering the educational program. Each Principal should study the needs of his or her individual school and survey the resources available in the school community. Opportunities may include school-to-work programs, community service projects, school-business partnerships, artists and writers in residence, etc.

Use of outside people will conform to policies of the Board, as implemented by the Superintendent and his/her staff.

#### **Legal References:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04(a)(13), Policy Development*  
*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04(k), Policy Development - Community Partnerships*  
*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.08(a)(2)(d), Instructional Resources*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IJOC - VOLUNTEERS**

The District recognizes the valuable contribution made to the total school program through the volunteer assistance of parents and other citizens. In working with volunteers, a District staff shall clearly explain the volunteer's responsibility.

The Superintendent is responsible for developing and implementing procedures for the utilization of volunteers. The selection of volunteers will be consistent with those policies and procedures under the direction of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The voluntary help of citizens should be requested by staff through administrative channels to assist in conducting selected activities and/or to serve as resource persons.

Volunteers should only function under supervision of a school employee.

#### Designated Volunteers

Designated volunteers will be required to undergo a background investigation and a criminal records check. "Designated volunteer" means any volunteer who:

1. Comes in direct contact with pupils on a daily basis;
2. Meets with students on a one-on-one basis;
3. Any other volunteer so designated by the School Board or Superintendent.

Designated volunteers are subject to the provisions of Policy GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal Records Check.

#### Coaches

Volunteer coaches of individual sports must be certified in that sport and be in compliance with the standards set by NHIAA.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*RSA 189:13-a, School Employee Volunteer Background Investigations*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IKB - HOMEWORK**

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. As an extension of the classroom, homework must be planned and organized, must be viewed as purposeful to the students; and should be evaluated and returned to students in a timely manner.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

A teacher shall carefully explain to his/her students how homework assignments relate to the grading system.

#### **Regulatory Reference:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.14 (b) Basic Instructional Standards*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IKE - PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

The Superintendent and the building principals shall develop rules for the promotion and retention of students, and the rules shall have the approval of the Board. These rules shall be published in the Parent-Student Handbook.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.14(d), Basic Instructional Standards*

**ADOPTED: May 8, 2008**

## **AMHERST Policy**

### **IL - EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

The Superintendent will evaluate the instructional programs annually in accordance with Board policies and state guidelines. S/he shall have the responsibility to report annually to the Board on the progress the District is making towards the attainment of its educational goals.

#### **Legal Reference:**

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306:24(c) (4), Assessment*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## AMHERST Policy

### ILBA - ASSESSMENT

It is the policy of the Board that the Superintendent will develop and manage an assessment program that provides ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum on improving student performance. The program must adhere to the processes for selection, administration, and interpretation of assessment instruments specified below. This program will include both local and statewide assessment tools. The program must be aligned with the goals of the School District and be designed to assess each student's progress toward meeting the defined curriculum objectives.

#### Definitions

For the purposes of assessment of high school course work through the demonstration of student mastery of course competencies, the following definitions are established:

Course Level Competency: the expected content, concepts, and skills to be mastered in a course.

Competency Assessment: the process by which a student demonstrates sufficient evidence of learning.

Mastery: a student presenting sufficient evidence of attainment of the required competencies.

#### Test Results

Test results will be analyzed and used with other data for the following purposes:

- To identify individual student strengths and weaknesses in skill development;
- To diagnose strengths and weaknesses of groups;
- To individualize instruction;
- To report progress to parents;
- To select curriculum materials;
- To set the pace of instruction;
- To select methods of instruction;
- To counsel students;
- To help determine revisions needed in the curriculum.

#### Selection

The selection process will include the professional staff in its efforts to investigate new assessment tools and evaluate existing ones. Assessment instruments selected will provide an authentic assessment of student learning outcomes through multiple formative and summative assessment instruments including, but not limited to teacher observation

of project-based learning, including off-site learning projects; competency-based assessments; and teacher-designed quizzes and tests. Additional instruments may include written examinations, oral examinations, alternative questions, demonstrations, writing exercises, individual projects, group projects, performances, student portfolios, and samples of student's best works.

### **Administration**

The assessment program will include a schedule for administration to students, distributed to staff and the board before the start of each school year.

Each building principal will provide assurance that test procedures are followed at the school level including the distribution and collection of test materials, test security, use of test results and testing dates as well as other pertinent requirements. Readiness assessment shall be administered to all children entering first grade. Handicapped students must be provided the opportunity to participate in all student assessments. Any modifications in administration should be made and documented during the Individualized Education Program (IEP) review.

### **Interpretation**

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that data from the student assessment program is compiled, analyzed, summarized, and reported to the Board annually. The Superintendent or designee is responsible for the scores of individual students and they shall be made available only to appropriate personnel within the school in which the student is enrolled and to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of each student as provided by law. Interpretation of test results shall be made available to parents and students.

The Board will provide funding for the student assessment program, including professional development for teachers in the use of tools to understand assessment results, to adjust instruction to meet personalized needs of students, and to monitor progress.

The Superintendent will provide an ongoing evaluation of the assessment program, and will provide regular reports to the Board showing the effectiveness of the curriculum on improving student performance.

### **Legal Reference:**

*RSA 193-C, Statewide Education Improvement and Assessment Program  
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.24, Assessment*

**ADOPTED: June 5, 2008**

## IMAH - HEALTH EDUCATION - DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Board recognizes that developmentally appropriate daily physical activity, exercise and physical education are ways to minimize health risks created by chronic inactivity, childhood obesity, and other related health problems. Physically active students come to school more ready to learn and are more likely to achieve their academic potential. Emphasis on physical activity in school children, during school and after school hours, can help children build lifetime health, mental health, and social well-being, and prevent adverse health consequences that include childhood obesity, cardiovascular disease, stroke, osteoporosis and Type 2 Diabetes. The Board recommends that students and staff participate in developmentally appropriate physical activity and exercise at for at least 30 to 60 minutes each day as a way to minimize these health risks. “Developmentally appropriate daily physical activity” means physical activity that is suitable for the cognitive age and individual characteristics of students.

In order to achieve this level of physical activity, the Board recommends the following practices:

- (1) Encourage parents/guardians to support their children's participation in enjoyable physical activities, and recognize that parents/guardians act as role models for active lifestyles;
- (2) Support special programs such as student and staff walking programs, family fitness events, and events that emphasize life-long physical activity;
- (3) Integrate health and physical activity across the school curriculum;
- (4) Encourage student-initiated activities that promote inclusive physical activity on a school-wide basis;
- (5) Commit adequate resources that include program funding, personnel, safe equipment, and facilities;
- (6) Provide professional development opportunities for all school staff that will assist them to effectively promote enjoyable and lifelong physical activity among youth, and that will assist school staff to recognize their influence as role models for active lifestyles;
- (7) Establish relationships with community recreation and youth sports programs and agencies to coordinate and complement physical activity programs;
- (8) Encourage physical activity recess periods; and
- (9) Institute a tracking and evaluation method to ensure that all students are engaging in developmentally appropriate daily physical activity.

The developmentally appropriate daily physical activity shall be in addition to and shall not be a replacement for the required physical education program.

This Policy shall be communicated to students, staff, and parents.

### **Legal References:**

*RSA 189:11-a, Food and Nutrition Programs*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 310, Appropriate Daily Physical Activity*

**ADOPTED: December 6, 2007**