

# **SMITHVILLE R-II SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAM AND DATA EVALUATION FORM**

## **I. PROGRAM/ DATA INFORMATION**

Type of Program or Data: Curriculum

Personnel Responsible for Evaluation: Executive Directors PK-6 and 7-14

Month of Annual Review: November 2024

## **II. EVALUATION OF PROGRAM/DATA**

(To Be Completed by Evaluators)

### **Evaluator Name:**

Denise Harwood  
Dr. PJ McGinnis  
Carrie Chambers  
Susan Argotsinger

### **Position:**

Executive Director PK-6  
Executive Director 7-14  
District ELA Instructional Coordinator  
District Math Instructional Coordinator

### **Evaluative Criteria:**

1. The district curriculum meets the learning needs of students.
2. All curriculum guides are regularly evaluated and revised, and the staff utilizes them to plan instructional activities.
3. Curriculum guides provide for instructional activities that meet the needs of students and that promote positive student performance relative to the Missouri Learning Standards.

### **Summary of Analysis of Curriculum:**

Curriculum is never static. Improvements are always being made as we work to adjust our units to best meet the needs of our students. See below for a summary of the core academic areas and elective areas.

**ELA** – In grades K-12, we continue to focus on priority standards, those skills our students need for their academic setting and success in life. Collaborative teams (PLCs) utilize priority standards to plan instruction and student evidence of understanding. Dr. Carrie Chambers, District ELA Instructional Coordinator, has worked to refine the curriculum as needed to address those priority standards effectively. Teachers have a clear scope and sequence to teach the priority standards. Dr. Chambers has begun an ELA resource review with K-12 teachers to ensure we have the best resources available to meet the needs of our students and staff.

**Mathematics** – Upside-Down Teaching continues to be our mathematical instructional model in Smithville, as this is our seventh year of implementation. Teachers learn from and with each other through lesson study, which began two years ago and continues annually with new teachers.

Teachers plan a lesson together, observe a peer teacher delivering the lesson, and then debrief the experience to refine the lesson as a team. This is a research-based method for improving teacher competency in lesson design.

**Science** – K-8 teachers utilize inquiry-based learning, strong application of writing and discussing learning, and alignment to the Missouri Learning Standards. In addition to the Missouri Learning Standards, teachers utilize the national Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) bundles. "Bundles" are groups of standards arranged together to create the endpoints for units of instruction. Bundling is just one step in a curriculum development process. Bundling is a helpful step in implementing standards because it helps students see connections between concepts and can allow more efficient use of instructional time.

Regarding the 8th grade Science MAP test covering 6th, 7th, and 8th grade standards, bundling (6,7,8) greatly helps students retain knowledge and understand connections between the varying grade-level standards. Science teachers in grades 9-12 follow the Missouri Learning Standards for their specific course. The EOC-tested Biology teachers now have a common plan time, which allows them time to align curriculum and pace and build systems for utilizing student data to remediate or enrich students as necessary.

**Social Studies** – In grades K-5, we have streamlined the Missouri Learning Standards significantly by selecting priority standards that build the skills necessary to be successful at the secondary level while eliminating non-essential standards. This process allows our elementary teachers to focus more on the content and allows our students to dive deeper into the most essential topics and skills. The Government/Civics EOC tested content now features a common plan time to meet as a Professional Learning Community. Also, this class is now offered exclusively in a year-long model instead of only a semester.

**Practical Arts** – In addition, demand for our agriculture and family/consumer science classes remains a popular choice for our students. New offerings for 24-25 are AP 2D Art, AP 3D Art, and Baking and Pastries. Additionally, the HS added more sections of existing PLTW classes because of high demand. For several years, our enrollment at Northland Career Center has continued to grow, offering our students valuable training in the trades. At the middle school, the demand for Industrial Tech has grown so much that the school now offers five sections of that class per semester. The SSD is a trendsetter in technology and innovation instruction at the elementary level. Our students take this course as part of their encore/specials rotation and are exposed to all aspects of technology, including coding.

**World Languages** – Spanish is offered at the middle school and high school. We continue to offer dual credit in both French (3 and 4) and Spanish (3, 4, and 5) at the high school.

**Health and PE** – Our Health and PE programs continue to be popular among students, and we offer various offerings at the High School level.

**Fine Arts** – Our Fine Arts programs continue to thrive, and students are consistently recognized at the state level for their skills. Our local productions of theater, music, and art are a source of pride for the schools and the community.

As the curriculum is often refined and clarified, the goal is to continue toward full implementation of the revised curriculum. This process takes time and is supported through Professional Development days, vertical team meetings, and Professional Learning Communities. State and local assessment data are used to make curricular adjustments in core content areas. The district continues to provide expanded curricular options for students, such as accelerated math at the Middle School and Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses at the High School. In addition, our students participate in Northland CAPS, Northland Career Center, and various online school platforms.

## **Competency-Based Learning: Purpose, Path, and Intended Outcome**

### **Purpose:**

Smithville Schools District has committed to building an academic program driven by the concepts found within Competency-Based Learning (CBL). “Competency” can be defined as “a combination of skills, knowledge, and abilities.” This is powerful and gives school systems significant leverage to address academics and behaviors within the same model. Some features and highlights of CBL are below:

**Increased Student Agency:** This work features tremendous clarity in the learning targets and the necessary skills to hit those targets. That level of clarity pushes students to take ownership of their learning, thus making them far more likely to achieve at high levels.

**Student-Centered Learning:** CBL focuses squarely on the individual student and their unique learning pace and style. This allows for more personalized instruction and a greater sense of ownership over their education.

**Real-World Relevance:** CBL often emphasizes projects and real-world applications, making learning more engaging and applicable to students' lives.

**Increased Student Engagement:** Students are more likely to be motivated and engaged when actively involved in their learning and see the direct connection between their efforts and progress. When the expectations and targets are clear, students gain ownership and engage deeply.

**Flexibility and Choice:** Students may have more flexibility in choosing projects, pacing their work, and demonstrating their learning in various ways, fostering creativity and critical thinking.

**Data-Driven Instruction:** CBL relies heavily on data to inform instruction. Teachers can use this data to identify student strengths and weaknesses and tailor their teaching accordingly.

**Preparation for the Future:** The skills and mindsets developed through competency-based learning, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and self-directed learning, are highly valued in today's rapidly changing job market. The Portrait of a Graduate competencies will be adopted within the CBL model.

### **Path:**

A K-12 transition to CBL takes considerable time, often 3-6 years. The timeline can be impacted by the amount of time and resources dedicated to the learning, system development, and implementation. We have decided to map our work with “phases” instead of “years/months.” This allows us to increase and decrease speed without the frustration of meeting a rigid deadline. Below is more information about our phases:

**Phase 1:** Identify Standards, Develop a Communication Plan, and Create/Analyze/Edit Proficiency Scales:

This phase intensely focuses on building a “Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum.” A guaranteed and viable curriculum can be taught in the allotted amount of time and addresses the standards to which we are held accountable. To ensure we do this well, we prioritize roughly 10-15 priority standards per class per year. We are choosing to teach and engage deeply with 10-15 high-leverage standards rather than skimming the surface on high numbers of standards. The Proficiency Scales are essential documents that include the standards, skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to achieve mastery. This creates tremendous clarity in what students are expected to learn and what is necessary to learn the standard.

**Phase 2:** Analyze/Align Assessments, and Utilize Scales For Instructional Design:

This second phase is about teaching and learning. With the Proficiency Scales, teams and teachers can create tightly aligned lessons and address the areas of concern identified from the assessment data. Since the scales communicate the learning targets, teachers can create assessments that tightly align with the standards. This tight alignment provides tremendous data to teachers so they can, with confidence and efficiency, remediate or enrich student learning.

**Phase 3:** Utilize Scales with Students, Share Scales With Families, and Report Academic Progress with Scales.

The final phase features scales with kids in the classroom and their families. When students have a clear roadmap of where to go and what is needed, they are far more likely to reach the target. In addition, as families can see and understand what students are learning, they are far more able to offer targeted support to their students. Lastly, we would examine whether our current grading system accurately communicates student learning. It is crucial to align the curriculum, instruction, and assessment before considering changing the grading system. CBL does not feature one particular grading system. Districts that shift to CBL often

develop a robust process with extensive representation to understand current systems and consider alternatives.

**Intended Outcome:**

The vision for classrooms leveraging CBL is one where the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and reporting align perfectly. Teachers would have autonomy to teach the skills and standards in the way they know best while allowing student assessment data to be a guide for making adjustments. Students would have crystal clear directions as to what the target is, as well as the skills necessary to reach it. With that, students would be agents of learning and increase ownership of their work. Fueled by clarity, the student’s intrinsic motivation would positively impact their outcomes. Families would clearly understand what is being taught and be able to assist and support their students. Lastly, a reporting system designed by a representative task force would instill a system that communicates what students know and can do. This system would be adopted throughout K-12 so all stakeholders would understand what a grade means and how it is created.

**Resource Review: Purpose, Path, and Intended Outcome**

**Purpose:**

It has been over ten years since the literacy department of Smithville School District has conducted a Resource Review. The current practice of balanced literacy does not allow for the systematic and explicit instruction needed by research and evidence for impactful literacy instruction. Furthermore, teachers require access to instructional materials and resources that best support our needs as a district while still teaching the standards required by the state of Missouri. Literacy instruction is multifaceted. It is nearly impossible for teachers to create the materials needed to provide sound instruction for all components (phonics, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, handwriting, critical thinking, text structure, writing craft, etc.).

The purpose of our Resource Review is twofold. First, we want to educate teachers on the research about solid instruction. We were fortunate to be selected for a grant that allows members of the Resource Review Team to work closely with experts from the University of Missouri. The grant also allowed for the purchase of books to inform the team of the best practices for literacy instruction. We will then use our knowledge to guide us as we analyze instructional models and resources that support these models. The goal is to blend the research and our understanding of the students in our classroom to design literacy instruction that will ensure all learners are successful.

**Path:**

Date	Topic/Essential Question
June/July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are our beliefs about reading and writing?</li><li>• How do we design instruction to support readers and writers?</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze current practices/beliefs</li> </ul>
September*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we design instruction to support readers and writers?</li> <li>What does the research say about instructional frameworks?</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does the research say about the components of an instructional framework?</li> <li>What is the best instructional framework for SSD?</li> </ul>
November*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What resources support our instructional framework?</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What resources support our instructional framework?</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot Resources</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot Resources</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision</li> </ul>
April/May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a plan to roll out for the 25-26 school year</li> </ul>

\*Learning with University of Missouri Consultants

**Intended Outcome:**

Our goal is to create an instructional model for literacy instruction. This model will support a guaranteed and viable curriculum, ensuring that all students in the Smithville School District receive the highest possible educational experience.

The Resource Review Team will choose a resource(s) to support the model. These resources will be analyzed and selected based on research and evidence, an understanding of our students' needs, and an expectation that our students are prepared for college and careers.

**Overall Curricular Concerns:**

The district has provided excellent support in ELA and mathematics through the curriculum facilitators, but the other content areas do not have the same support.

Tested contents have been prioritized, and they are afforded common plan times to collaborate. Non-tested content do not have common plan time in their schedules to collaborate.

**Overall Curricular Recommendations:**

Continue to provide collaboration time, resources and instructional support for teachers through curriculum facilitators and similar personnel to sustain the rigor of the Missouri Learning Standards.

Regarding the shift to CBL, building and district leaders have intentionally “been out in front” of the heavy learning and work. It is essential to ensure that teachers are deeply engaged in the learning and leading moving forward. Teachers should have opportunities for various professional development inside and outside of the district as well as opportunities to lead discussions about implementation and needed adjustments.