

## DE SOTO AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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### INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

The De Soto Area School District believes that instruction begins with effective leadership, able teachers, and high expectations for student learning. The District accepts its responsibility to assist all personnel in becoming familiar with the effective teaching/learning research.

The District believes the instructional program must start where the student is and provide continuing challenges according to each student's abilities. Students cannot be expected to develop at the same rate, or to the same degree, so the program must be adjusted, to the degree possible, to meet the individual student's needs, interests, abilities, and rate of growth.

Instruction is an interactive process which should encourage mutual caring, respect, and active student involvement. The District also believes student accountability, parental involvement, and a nurturing climate enhance effective instruction.

#### Educational Goals

The District is looked upon as an ever-changing social community where young people grow and develop mentally, physically, morally, emotionally, and socially. At school they are provided opportunities to determine and to work toward goals purposeful and significant to them. With this in mind, the following educational goals shall provide direction for the instructional programs in the District:

##### 1. Self-Realization

The District shall exercise a concerted effort to aid each student to develop a feeling of self-worth and confidence, enabling him/her to experience a sense of pride and accomplishment in a highly technological, rapidly and dramatically-changing society. The individual should develop a positive self-image within the context of his/her own heritage and within the larger context of the total society. The students shall:

- A. know and respect themselves as individuals;
- B. recognize their strengths and limitations in setting personal goals;
- C. develop their interests and potentials in order to achieve those personal goals;
- D. have insight into their own value structure and recognize how values affect their lives and relationships with others;
- E. learn to take more responsibility for their actions and provide more of their own internal discipline;
- F. explore, experience, and recognize the limitations and strengths of some types of euphoric mental states; and
- G. strive for individuality, pride, and satisfaction in self rather than material gain in his/her accomplishments.

## 2. Human Relations

The District shall attempt to foster an environment where students, school personnel, and other community members interrelate to seek an understanding of, an appreciation for, a respect toward, and a concern for all human beings. The students shall be provided experiences enabling them to:

- A. develop a desire to contribute to the well being of society in all areas of their lives and place a higher value on people than things;
- B. understand and appreciate the value systems, cultures, customs and history of their heritage as well as the value systems, cultures, customs and history of others;
- C. learn to recognize and respect their rights as well as the rights of others;
- D. develop an ability to form satisfying and responsible relationships with a wide variety of people;
- E. utilize a variety of group relations skills;

- F. recognize the political, social and cultural interdependence among peoples of the world;
- G. develop an ability to manage conflicts in values and value systems;
- H. develop an ability to discern negative from positive consequences of peer pressure; and
- I. gain a respect for the ability, property, and efforts of others.

### 3. Basic Skills

The District shall explore and attempt to implement the best possible means of helping students acquire and apply the fundamental academic skills. The students shall be given extensive opportunities to expand their abilities in:

- A. accumulating, comprehending and evaluating ideas and facts through reading, viewing and listening;
- B. communicating ideas, understandings, and facts through writing and speaking;
- C. learning and using the processes of language, science and mathematics;
- D. performing psychomotor (mental-physical) skills that enhance the learning process; and
- E. using problem solving techniques and processes to make decisions and solve problems.

### 4. Mental and Physical Health

The District shall provide the students opportunities to develop and maintain both sound minds and healthy bodies. The students shall therefore, be offered opportunities and other help necessary to:

- A. understand the interrelationship of mental and physical health;

- B. develop an awareness of and an incentive to use community resources to maintain their optimum mental and physical health;
- C. demonstrate knowledge, use and appreciation of safety principles, concepts and practices;
- D. gain knowledge concerning the various body systems and how they are affected by dietary habits, physical and mental activity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and poisons;
- E. understand and appreciate self so as to better cope with the strengths and weaknesses therein; and
- F. develop and maintain a value structure to serve as a decision making referent to more adequately resolve the many conflicts concerned with the physical, mental, social and emotional growth process.

#### 5. Career Education and Occupational Competence

In a rapidly changing society where occupations change, appear and disappear, means must be found to equip students to deal with the world of work. The District shall meet this challenge by offering students educational opportunities to prepare for occupational, academic and technical programs beyond high school. The students shall be given experiences that help develop:

- A. respect for the dignity of all occupations and the desire to pursue a satisfying vocation;
- B. knowledge and understanding of opportunities open to him/her for preparing for a productive life;
- C. recognition of the need for constant retraining and lifelong learning; and
- D. some beginning competencies enabling the student to enter the job market and/or pursue further training at post high school levels.

#### 6. Cultural Appreciation

The art forms of a people communicate much that is necessary to know about their culture. In order to heighten this kind of understanding, students in the

District shall have opportunities to express themselves in a variety of artistic ways. The students shall be given opportunities to:

- A. appreciate art, crafts, music, literary and dramatic forms, and their place in the historical and cultural heritage of this and other nations;
- B. participate in a variety of musical, dramatic, art, and literary experiences; and
- C. develop an awareness of the importance of and the use of cultural and recreational facilities in his/her community.

#### 7. Lifelong Learning

Life expectancy is such that the average individual has many productive years beyond his/her formal school years. At the same time, the world is changing at an ever-increasing rate, constantly requiring new approaches. The District feels that it is imperative that an individual be prepared to participate in a variety of lifelong learning experiences. The student shall be provided opportunities to learn:

- A. the ever-changing social, economic, and political environment dictates the need for constant learning and skill development if one is to successfully cope with the change;
- B. the great variety of life-long learning opportunities available, how to locate them, and how to use them to the best advantage;
- C. recognize his/her potential and be able to utilize it for learning and working; and
- D. learn to develop long-term life goals in a consistent and realistic pattern.

#### 8. Citizenship and Political Understanding

Citizenship is the quality of an individual's response to membership in the community of the locality, state, nation, and world. Because our District is a part of that society, it is important that the total school experience

offer some opportunities for students to begin learning and practicing their roles, rights, and responsibilities within the framework of legitimate government. The student shall therefore, be given directed experiences to help him/her:

- A. understand the structure, governance and governmental heritage of society (communities, state, national, world);
- B. understand the importance of effective participation in fulfilling his/her obligation to society;
- C. develop some of the participatory skills necessary for the success of a democratic society; and
- D. become a more responsible member of the school community and grow in his/her ability to discipline self.

9. Economic Understanding

The District believes that the effective participation in the economy as a consumer and producer of goods and services requires an understanding of personal and world economics and the relationship between government and economy. The student shall be given opportunities to:

- A. learn to evaluate his/her needs, match products to needs and effectively use products and natural resources;
- B. understand the various systems of production and distribution, the role and responsibility of the individual in these systems and the ways in which these systems influence the lives of people;
- C. understand the relationship between individual consumption of goods and the effect on the environment;
- D. understand the process of obtaining employment, planning and budgeting personal income, saving and investing, and financing major purchases;
- E. be aware of the agencies which assist and protect consumers and producers; and

F. be aware of national and international business organizations, monetary systems and the effects of government on their economies.

#### 10. Physical Environment

The quality of life and ultimately the question of survival depends upon man's ability to live in harmony with the physical environment. The District should therefore, provide experiences leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes enabling the students to develop a use of natural resources recognizing the concurrent rights of present and future generations. The students shall be given opportunities to:

- A. acquire knowledge and understanding of the social, physical, and biological worlds and the balance between man and the environment;
- B. understand the social, economic and political implications of population growth;
- C. understand the ecological balance and the effect of people, technology and industrialization on altering and maintaining this balance;
- D. develop a comprehension of and perspective for the world as an integral ecosystem;
- E. understand how people and technology alter the natural and physical environment;
- F. improve their personal environment;
- G. discriminate in their producing, usage and purchasing practices in relation to ecological considerations; and
- H. play an active role in preserving and improving the environment.

#### 11. Creative, Constructive and Critical Thinking

The District believes that students must be able to cope with changes affecting the quality of their lives. District students should be prepared to apply imagination, creativity, constructive and critical thinking to personal problems and societal conflicts.

District schools should provide an environment where students can develop skills of thinking and where experiences can be examined and integrated. The student shall be involved in experiences which help him/her:

- A. become more able to deal effectively with situations which are new to his/her experiences;
- B. think and act in an independent, self-fulfilling way and in a considerate and responsible manner toward others; and
- C. expand the logical processes of search, analysis, evaluation and abstract thinking.

LEGAL REF.: Sections 118.01 Wisconsin Statutes  
121.02(1)(j), (k), (L)

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