

Instruction

Curriculum Content 1

The curriculum shall contain instruction on subjects required by State statute or regulation as follows:

1. In kindergarten through grade 8, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) reading, (c) other communication skills, (d) science, (e) mathematics, ² (f) social studies, (g) art, (h) music, ³ and (i) drug and substance abuse prevention. ⁴ A reading opportunity of 60 minutes per day will be promoted for all students in kindergarten through grade 3 whose reading levels are one grade level or more lower than their current grade level. ⁵
2. In grades 9 through 12, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) writing intensive course, (c) science, (d) mathematics, ⁶ (e) social studies including U.S. history, (f) foreign language, (g) music, (h) art, (i) driver and safety education, and (j) vocational education. ⁷

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¹ Districts must have a policy on physical education (23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(p). Policies on the remaining topics in this policy are optional. State or federal law controls this policy's content. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420 recommends that activities, including student internships and observations of government in action, be a part of the instructional program where appropriate.

² 105 ILCS 5/2-3.156, added by P.A. 97-704, eff. 1-1-2013, requires ISBE to coordinate, adapt and develop middle and high school math curriculum models. There is no consistent definition for *middle school* or *high school* in either State or federal law. Districts are not required to use ISBE's models and may develop their own mathematics curricula.

The purpose of the math curriculum models will be to aid school districts and teachers in implementing the Common Core Standards. The ISBE has adopted new Math and English Language Arts (ELA) standards for K-12 education referred to as the "New Ill. State Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core." The goal of incorporating the Common Core Standards into the State Goals for Learning is to better prepare Ill. students for success in college and the workforce in a competitive global economy. www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm.

The terms Common Core Standards and the "New Ill. State Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core" are synonymous. Referencing the Ill. Learning Standards includes them both. That is because they are incorporated by reference into ISBE's rules and State Goals for Learning. A district that wants to include the term *Common Core Standards* in its policy may do so; however, districts should understand that referring to the Common Core Standards only will cover only math and ELA learning standards and goals and not any other subject areas that the Ill. Learning Standards cover. The best practice is to continue using Ill. Learning Standards, which includes the Common Core Standards.

³ 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.430.

⁴ 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2. House Resolution 824 (2014) urges all schools in Illinois to educate youth about the dangers of using heroin and the rising numbers of accidental deaths from heroin overdoses (1) through comprehensive drug education programs, including the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, and (2) especially on Ill. Heroin Abuse Awareness Day, November 4, 2014. No guidance on age appropriate instruction for heroin abuse is provided in the resolution.

⁵ 105 ILCS 5/10-20.53.

⁶ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.156, added by P.A. 97-704, eff. 1-1-2013. See f/n 2.

105 ILCS 5/27-22, amended by P.A. 98-885, allows the substitution of an advanced placement computer science course for a year of mathematics. For specific requirements, see 6:300-E2, State Law Graduation Requirements, and 6:310, High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-entering Students.

⁷ 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440, 105 ILCS 5/27-22. The General Assembly encouraged school boards to implement American sign language courses into the school foreign language curriculum (105 ILCS 5/10-20.46). Senate Joint Resolution 68, 96th General Assembly, encourages school districts to explore the introduction of Arabic as a foreign language in their curriculums.

Students otherwise eligible to take a driver education course must receive a passing grade in at least 8 courses during the previous 2 semesters before enrolling in the course. The Superintendent or designee may waive this requirement if he or she believes a waiver to be in the student's best interest. ⁸ The course shall include classroom instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue. ⁹ Automobile safety instruction covering traffic regulations and highway safety must include instruction on the consequences of alcohol consumption and the operation of a motor vehicle. ¹⁰ The eligibility requirements contained in State law for the receipt of a certificate of completion from the Secretary of State shall be provided to students in writing at the time of their registration. ¹¹

3. In grades 7 through 12, as well as in interscholastic athletic programs, steroid abuse prevention must be taught. ¹²
4. In kindergarten through grade 12, provided it can be funded by private grants or the federal government, violence prevention and conflict resolution must be stressed, including: (a) causes of conflict, (b) consequences of violent behavior, (c) non-violent resolution, and (d) relationships between drugs, alcohol, and violence. ¹³
5. In grades kindergarten through 12, age-appropriate Internet safety must be taught, the scope of which shall be determined by the Superintendent or designee. The curriculum must incorporate policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks* and, at a minimum, include: (a) education about appropriate online behavior, (b) interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and (c) cyberbullying awareness and response. ¹⁴

School districts may contract with a commercial driver training school (CDTS) for driver education by obtaining a waiver or modification of the administrative rules and regulations promulgated by the ISBE or a modification of School Code mandates (105 ILCS 5/2-3.25g, ~~amended by P.A. 97-1025, eff. 1-1-13~~). See 2:20-E, *Waiver and Modification Request Resource Guide*. To qualify to contract with a school district, a CDTS must (a) hold a valid license issued by the Ill. Sec. of State, and (b) provide instructors who hold a valid Ill. teaching certificate or license (*Id.*). A district contracting with a CDTS must provide a list to ISBE of the CDTS instructors (*Id.*). The list must include the name, personal ISBE identification number, birth dates and driver's license number of each instructor who will teach driver education (*Id.*).

⁸ 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2.

⁹ 105 ILCS 5/27-24.2.

¹⁰ 105 ILCS 5/27-17.

¹¹ The Ill. Vehicle Code, 625 ILCS 5/6-408.5, ~~amended by P.A. 98-718~~, contains these requirements; they are paraphrased below and may be added to the policy or otherwise disseminated.

Before a certificate of completion will be requested from the Secretary of State, a student must receive a passing grade in at least 8 courses during the 2 semesters last ending before requesting the certificate. A certificate of completion will not be requested for any person less than 18 years of age who has dropped out of school unless the individual provides:

1. Written verification of his or her enrollment in a ~~GED high school equivalency~~ or alternative education program or a ~~GED high school equivalency~~ certificate (~~formerly GED certificate~~);
2. Written verification that before dropping out, the individual had received passing grades in at least 8 courses during the 2 previous semesters last ending before requesting a certificate;
3. Written consent from the individual's parent/guardian and the Regional Superintendent; or
4. Written waiver from the Superintendent of the School District in which the individual resides or resided at the time he or she dropped out of school, or from the chief school administrator with respect to a dropout who attended a non-public high school. A waiver may be given if the Superintendent or chief administrator deems it to be in the individual's best interests.

¹² 105 ILCS 5/27-23.3.

¹³ 105 ILCS 5/27-23.4.

¹⁴ 47 C.F.R. § 54.520(c)(1)(i) and 105 ILCS 5/27-13.3 control this section. "Grades kindergarten through 12" is used because federal law requires school districts that receive E-rate funding to certify that they have an Internet safety education policy for all minors (47 C.F.R. §54.520(c)(1)(i)). This federal law defines *minors* as any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years (47 C.F.R. §54.520(a)(4)).

6. In all grades, character education must be taught including respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship in order to raise students' honesty, kindness, justice, discipline, respect for others, and moral courage. 15
7. In all schools, citizenship values must be taught, including: (a) patriotism, (b) democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality, (c) proper use and display of the American flag, (d) the Pledge of Allegiance, and (e) the voting process. 16
8. In all grades, physical education must be taught including a developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. Unless otherwise exempted, all students are required to engage daily during the school day in a physical education course. For exemptions and substitutions, see policies 6:310, High School Credit for Alternative Courses and Programs, and Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students and 7:260, Exemption from Physical Activity. 17
9. In all schools, health education must be stressed, including: (a) proper nutrition, (b) physical fitness, (c) components necessary to develop a sound mind in a healthy body, (d) dangers and

105 ILCS 5/27-13.3 requires a unit on Internet safety for students in grades 3 or above. It recommends 7 topics for the unit on Internet safety and required ISBE to "make available resource materials for educating children regarding child online safety." It also invites schools to "adopt an age-appropriate curriculum for Internet safety instruction of students in grades kindergarten through 12."

For boards that do not receive E-rate funds and do not want to exceed the requirements of the School Code, replace this section with the following sentence: "In grades 3 or above, the curriculum contains a unit on Internet safety, the scope of which shall be determined by the Superintendent or designee."

15 105 ILCS 5/27-12.

Because of the negative outcomes associated with bullying in schools, the Ill. General Assembly has also found "that [school districts] should educate students, parents, and school district personnel about what behaviors constitute prohibited bullying" (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a), amended by P.A. 98-669). A board may want to add the following option:

Instruction in all grades should include educating students about behaviors that violate Board policy 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment.

The Ill. General Assembly invited boards to "make suitable provisions for instruction in bullying-prevention and gang resistance education and training in all grades and include such instruction in the courses of study regularly taught therein those grades," 105 ILCS 5/27-23.710(c). A board that shares this concern may add the following option: "In addition, in all grades, bullying-prevention and gang resistance education and training must be taught."

16 105 ILCS 5/27-3 requires the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited every day in elementary and secondary schools. Requirements for displaying a U.S. flag at each school and in each classroom are found in 5 ILCS 465/3 and 465/3a.

Note that the Illinois statute does not require every student to recite the Pledge – that kind of mandatory participation would violate the U.S. Constitution. Schools may not coerce a student into saying the Pledge, nor may they punish students for refusing to participate in any aspect of the flag ritual, including standing, saluting the flag, and reciting the Pledge. West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnett, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); Sherman v. Community Consolidated School Dist. 21 of Wheeling Township, 980 F.2d 437 (7th Cir. 1992). Consider using permissive rather than mandatory language to introduce the recitation of the Pledge, such as, "You may now stand to recite the Pledge." Schools may, of course, require that non-participants maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

17 105 ILCS 5/27-5 requires school boards to provide for students' physical education and allows the P.E. course offered in grades 5 through 10 to include the health education courses required by State law.

105 ILCS 5/27-6, amended by P.A. 98-116, describes when students may be excused from daily P.E. See also 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(p). 105 ILCS 5/27-7 describes the goals and requirements for P.E. courses; these are re-stated in this sample policy.

105 ILCS 5/27-6 contains an exception to the daily P.E. requirement for schools engaged in block scheduling; if this is applicable, substitute this sentence for the last sentence in this paragraph:

Unless otherwise exempted, all students are required to engage daily during the school day, except on block scheduled days for those schools in block scheduling, in a physical education course.

avoidance of abduction, and (e) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in all grades. The Superintendent shall implement a comprehensive health education program in accordance with State law. 18

10. In all schools, career/vocational education must be taught, including: (a) the importance of work, (b) the development of basic skills to enter the world of work and/or continue formal education, (c) good work habits and values, (d) the relationship between learning and work, and (e) if possible, a student work program that provides the student with work experience as an extension of the regular classroom. A career awareness and exploration program must be available at all grade levels. 19
11. In grades 9 through 12, consumer education must be taught, including: financial literacy; installment purchasing; budgeting, savings, and investing; banking; simple contracts; income taxes; personal insurance policies; the comparison of prices; homeownership; and the roles of consumers interacting with agriculture, business, labor unions, and government in formulating and achieving the goals of the mixed free enterprise system. 20
12. In all schools, conservation of natural resources must be taught, including: (a) home ecology, (b) endangered species, (c) threats to the environment, and (d) the importance of the environment to life as we know it. 21
13. In all schools, United States history must be taught, including: (a) the principles of representative government, (b) the Constitutions of the U.S. and Illinois, (c) the role of the U.S. in world affairs, (d) the role of labor unions, and (e) the role and contributions of ethnic groups, including but not limited to, the African Americans, Albanians, Asian Americans, Bohemians, Czechs, French, Germans, Hispanics (including the events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens during the Great

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18 105 ILCS 110/3 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(n). Each school system shall provide a program in compliance with the Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act. More detailed health education program content is described in administrative procedure 6:60-AP, *Comprehensive Health Education Program*. It includes the requirements for the development of a family life and sex education program (105 ILCS 5/27-9.1 and 110/3, ~~amended by 98-441, eff. 1-1-14~~), among other health education topics including *teen dating violence* (105 ILCS 110/3.10, ~~added by P.A. 98-190 and 1~~, see 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited* for the required “teen dating violence policy”) ~~and cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator use (105 ILCS 110/3, amended by P.A. 98-632).~~

Citations for letters (a) - (e) in this paragraph follow:

- (a) 105 ILCS 5/2-3.139 and 105 ILCS 5/27-7 (proper nutrition) and see also policy 6:50, *School Wellness*.
- (b) *Id.* (physical fitness) and see also policy 6:50, *School Wellness*.
- (c) *Id.* (sound mind and healthy body).
- (d) 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2 (dangers and avoidance of abduction). The State Police and ISBE must develop instruction on child abduction prevention (20 ILCS 2605/2605-480).
- (e) 105 ILCS 110/3, ~~amended by P.A. 97-1147~~ and 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13, ~~added by P.A. 96-1524~~ a/k/a *Erin's Law* (child sexual abuse prevention). *Erin's Law* requires a policy addressing child sexual abuse prevention. A sentence in 6:60-AP, *Comprehensive Health Education Program* restates the basic recommendations for a child sexual abuse prevention program from page 16 of the *Erin's Law* Taskforce Final Report (Report) to Governor Quinn at: www.isbe.state.il.us/reports/erins-law-final0512.pdf. The professional educator training component of *Erin's Law* is addressed in policy 5:100, *Staff Development*. The Report also encourages parental involvement because parents play a key role in protecting children from child sexual abuse.

19 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(i). See 105 ILCS 435/ for the Vocational Education Act.

20 105 ILCS 5/27-12.1; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(k).

21 105 ILCS 5/27-13.1 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(l).

Depression), Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Lithuanians, Polish, Russians, Scots, and Slovaks in the history of this country and State. ²²

In addition, all schools shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on Constitution Day, each September 17, commemorating the September 17, 1787 signing of the Constitution. However, when September 17 falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or following week. ²³

14. In grade 7 and all high school courses concerning U.S. history or a combination of U.S. history and American government, students must view a Congressional Medal of Honor film made by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, provided there is no cost for the film. ²⁴
15. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on the Holocaust and crimes of genocide, including Nazi atrocities of 1933-1945, Armenian Genocide, the Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, and more recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan. ²⁵
16. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on the history, struggles, and contributions of women. ²⁶
17. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on Black History, including the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the vestiges of slavery in this country, as well as the struggles and contributions of African-Americans. ²⁷
18. In all schools offering a secondary agricultural education program, the curriculum includes courses as required by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80. ²⁸
19. In all schools, instruction during courses as determined by the Superintendent or designee on disability history, awareness, and the disability rights movement. ²⁹

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²² 105 ILCS 5/27-21 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(r).

²³ Section 111 of Division J of Pub. L. 108-447, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, Dec. 8, 2004; 118 Stat. 2809, 3344-45 (Section 111). Section 111(b) states: “[e]ach educational institution that receives Federal funds for a fiscal year shall hold an educational program on the U.S. Constitution on September 17 of such year”

²⁴ 105 ILCS 5/27-3.5. The Congressional Medal of Honor film is available on ISBE’s website for no cost at www.isbe.net/curriculum/html/medal_of_honor.htm.

²⁵ 105 ILCS 5/27-20.3 requires the curriculum to include a *unit of instruction* on this subject but does not specify the amount of time that constitutes a *unit of instruction*.

²⁶ 105 ILCS 5/27-20.5 requires the curriculum to include a *unit of instruction* on this subject but does not specify the amount of time that constitutes a *unit of instruction*. House Resolution 365 (2013) and Senate Resolution 1073 (2014) both urges all Illinois educators to share with students of an appropriate age the story of *comfort women* when discussing the history of Asia or World War II, or the issue of human trafficking.

²⁷ 105 ILCS 527-20.4 requires the curriculum to include a *unit of instruction* on this subject but does not specify the amount of time that constitutes a *unit of instruction*.

²⁸ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80(e) or (f).

²⁹ 105 ILCS 5/27-23.8. The statute requires the school board to determine the minimum amount of instructional time. The sample policy complies by delegating this responsibility to the superintendent or designee. The statute requires that the instruction be founded on the principle that all students, including students with disabilities, have the right to exercise self-determination. It urges districts to request individuals with disabilities to assist with the development and delivery of this instruction and allows instruction to be supplemented by knowledgeable guest speakers.

LEGAL REF.: 5 ILCS 465/3 and 465/3a.
20 ILCS 2605/2605-480.
105 ILCS 5/2-3.80(e) and (f), 5/27-3, 5/27-3.5, 5/27-5, 5/27-6, 5/27-7, 5/27-12, 5/27-12.1, 5/27-13.1, 5/27-13.2, 5/27-20.3, 5/27-20.4, 5/27-20.5, 5/27-21, 5/27-22, 5/27-23.3, 5/27-23.4, 5/27-23.7, 5/27-23.8, 5/27-[23.10](#), [5/27-24.2](#), 435/, and 110/3.
625 ILCS 5/6-408.5.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.420, 1.430, and 1.440.
Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 108-447, Section 111 of Division J.
Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Pub. L. No. 110-385, Title II, 122 stat. 4096 (2008).
47 C.F.R. §54.520.

CROSS REF.: 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), [7:180 \(Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment\)](#), 7:190 (Student Discipline), 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Activity)