

## **LOCALLY DEVELOPED COURSES**

### **Background**

The Division supports the local development and authorization of junior high school and senior high school complementary courses which do not duplicate provincially authorized courses, to further develop and cultivate the unique interests and abilities of students, to foster educational improvement and excellence through innovation at the local level to meet the unique needs of a local community. All education programs offered and instructional materials used must reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honor and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans. All locally developed courses must have authorization by the Board.

### **Definition**

Locally approved courses are defined within this Administrative Procedure as those courses that have been authorized by the Board after being locally developed or acquired.

### **Procedures**

1. The process set for local authorization and subsequent class instruction, course monitoring, etc. will occur in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines of Alberta Education.
2. Courses granted the status of locally approved courses by the Board will be limited to courses which:
  - 2.1 Fall within the Complementary Course category as defined by Alberta Education;
  - 2.2 Are applicable only to junior and senior high school programming;
  - 2.3 Do not duplicate provincially authorized courses;
  - 2.4 Have an instructional focus;
  - 2.5 Do not replace activities that are a normal part of extra-curricular or co-curricular programs offered by a school (e.g. school team sports, school newspaper, yearbook) and community programs offered by individuals or organizations (e.g. figure skating, ballet, sports activities, club); and
  - 2.6 Have been endorsed by the Principal.
3. A course submitted for local approval will contain the following descriptive elements:
  - 3.1 The title of the course;
  - 3.2 The name of the teacher and the school;
  - 3.3 The applicable grade, school year, credit allocations (if applicable) and anticipated enrolment;

- 3.4 A rationale or philosophy for the course;
  - 3.5 Statements indicating the general and specific learner expectations;
  - 3.6 A description of the method to be used for assessing student achievement;
  - 3.7 A list of learning resources approved for use by the Board that must meet the requirements of section 16 of the Education Act and Alberta Education's criteria for recognizing diversity and promoting respect;
  - 3.8 The special facilities or equipment necessary;
  - 3.9 The identification of controversial or sensitive course components and treatment at the school level;
  - 3.10 A statement indicating that significant overlap with provincially developed courses does not exist;
  - 3.11 For senior high school courses, information regarding which other Division is offering the course, if applicable; and
  - 3.12 How this course differs from that being offered by other school divisions.
4. Before a course is considered by the Board for local approval the following process will have been followed:
- 4.1 After its preparation a course description is submitted to the Principal for endorsement.
  - 4.2 The course description is submitted to the Superintendent or designate along with a letter of endorsement from the Principal.
    - 4.2.1 In the case of a senior high school course description, in accordance with provincial policy, a course outline must first be submitted to the Director, Curriculum Branch for review.
    - 4.2.2 Strict timelines apply as indicated in the Alberta Education policy. The Director will determine whether there is a possible overlap with provincially authorized curriculum.
    - 4.2.3 After a response has been received, the review document will become part of the submission forwarded to the Superintendent or designate.
  - 4.3 The Superintendent or designate will evaluate whether the submission meets the requirements of this Administrative Procedure and will either return the document for revisions or forward it to the Board for its consideration, along with his/her recommendation.
5. The following timelines for submission of documents to the Superintendent or designate will apply unless extenuating circumstances occur, as determined by the recipient:
- 5.1 May 15 for course implementation at the beginning of the next school year; and
  - 5.2 December 15 for course implementation at the beginning of the second semester of the same school year.

Board approval is required prior to course implementation.

6. Board action regarding course approval or re-approval will occur in the form of a Board motion, which will designate an applicable time period, not to exceed three (3) years.
7. Once a locally approved course is in operation, the Principal will be responsible to monitor the course and will determine its success in relation to stated goals.
  - 7.1 The Principal will file a written course evaluation report with the Superintendent or designate within one (1) month of completion of the course.
8. The Superintendent or designate will maintain records containing a written description of each locally approved course, the date and duration of its approval by the Board, copies of all related documentation required by this Administrative Procedure and any other information considered by him/her to be pertinent.

Revised/Adopted: JUN 2016/NOV 2019

Reference: Section 18, 33, 52, 53,196, 197, 222 Education Act  
Guide to Education, ECS to Grade 12