

Iowa CORE Curriculum



An Update to the Sioux Center Christian School Society

June 14, 2011

- The Iowa Core Curriculum (ICC) is a state-wide effort to improve **teaching** and **learning** to ensure that all Iowa students engage in a **rigorous** and **relevant curriculum**. The ICC focuses on three areas: **content** (what is taught), **instruction** (how things are taught), and **assessment** (how we know students have learned). Teachers are equipped in these three areas through **professional development**.
- Content includes **math, science, literacy, social studies, and 21st century skills**.
- The ICC is a requirement for all accredited schools in the state of Iowa. It is a great **opportunity** for SCCS to review its current curriculum, continually improve instruction, and focus on assessment tools. It is also a great **springboard** for quality professional development.
- Sioux Center Christian School has been working on aligning with and fulfilling our responsibilities with the Iowa Core Curriculum since 2008. The process of alignment involves these questions: Are we teaching the right **content** at each level? Do our **assessment** choices align with that content? Do we use assessments to make choices on **instruction**? Are we **teaching** content in an effective way? Our deadline to be fully aligned is July 1, 2014.
- We must show that our current content standards align with those in the ICC. The ICC team feels that there is no part of the ICC curriculum that doesn't fit with our school's mission.
- SCCS has been working on these **key alignment outcomes**:
 - Outcome 1: Build and develop proper leadership teams. This outcome has been fulfilled, with the leadership team consisting of Joe Dirksen, Rebecca De Smith, Dave Mulder, Josh Bowar, Beth Bleeker, Peg De Haan, Karl Hoekstra, Jena Schouten, Kevin Timmer, and Ryan Zonnefeld. The team meets to discuss ICC topics and further guide the work of our implementation.
 - Outcome 2: Work together with community members and supporting agencies toward implementation. We have worked closely with the AEA throughout this process. We have also included articles in our school newsletter and plan to include more ICC information on the school website.
 - Outcome 3: Set in place improvement plans for teaching and learning. Self studies have been completed and an action plan has been written to guide our work.
 - Outcome 4: Align content with the ICC. During the spring of 2011, the SCCS faculty completed a process that detailed our current content alignment.
 - Outcome 5: Provide professional development for teachers. Teachers participated in small group research projects during the 2010-2011 school year. Plans are being made for 2011-2012.
 - Outcome 6: Support quality instruction and assessment techniques. Teachers participated in trainings on best practices provided by Dordt College professors Tim Van Soelen and Ed Starkenburg. Teachers have shared how they are using what they learned in the training.
- The ultimate goals of our work at SCCS with the ICC include: **better teaching, better learning, better assessment, better support, leadership at all levels, and community involvement**.
- The SCCS ICC Vision: The vision for the Iowa Core Curriculum at Sioux Center Christian School is to ensure the **success of all** students by providing **challenging content, effective instruction, and meaningful assessment** in order to **improve the achievement of all students**, preparing them for the **world of work, lifelong learning, and service to God**.

Characteristics of Effective Instruction



STUDENT CENTERED CLASSROOMS:

- Educators support all students in making connections to construct new learning in order to make decisions and solve problems.
- The educator facilitates opportunities for students to be metacognitive.
- Educators and students are partners in learning.
- Educators facilitate time for students to learn collaboratively.
- Educators use meaningful and authentic assessment in a real world context.



TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING:

- Instruction facilitates the construction of deep conceptual and procedural knowledge.
- Instruction facilitates the development of representations and conceptual models.
- Instruction inducts students into the discipline.
- Instruction facilitates the application of new learnings and understandings in new and novel situations (transfer).



ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING:

- Educator utilizes K-12 learning progressions along which students are expected to progress in a domain.
- Student learning goals are clear, focused on the intended learning, and communicated so all students understand the criteria for success.
- Instructional modifications for students are planned from carefully elicited evidence of student learning.
- Descriptive feedback identifies for students the specific knowledge and skills needed to reach learning goals.
- Self and peer assessment is planned and structured by educator and students in order to develop life-long learning skills.
- Educator facilitates the development of a collaborative classroom climate.



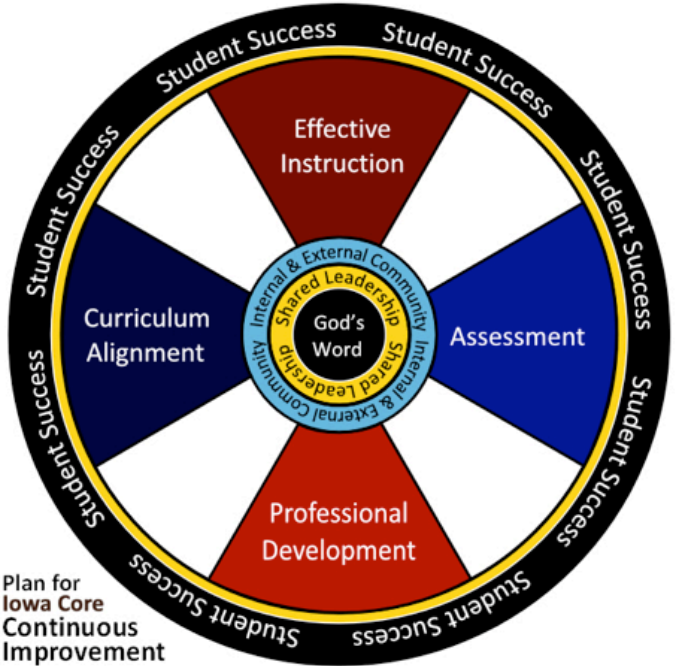
RIGOROUS AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM:

- Higher order thinking (HOT) is performed by students during instruction.
- Deep understanding and mastery of critical disciplinary concepts and skills are demonstrated.
- Concepts and skills are applied to situations, issues, and problems in the world beyond school.



TEACHING FOR LEARNER DIFFERENCES:

- Instruction is focused on "big ideas" -- the essential concepts and skills within the content.
- Instruction is designed and delivered to match students' needs based on assessment data of students' prior knowledge, readiness, individual interests and learning preferences.
- Educator provides flexibility within content, instruction, and product to allow for variances in students' acquisition and demonstration of learning.
- Educator provides clear instruction about how to learn, making the various strategies and skills of the learning process conspicuous to all students.
- Instruction includes opportunities for students to practice and review their learning and receive feedback.
- Educator regularly monitors each student's progress related to the acquisition of the essential concepts and skills and adjusts instruction to meet students' learning needs.



Plan for Iowa Core Continuous Improvement

To learn more, check out <http://www.corecurriculum.iowa.gov/> and

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_rsticketspro&view=knowledgebase&cid=126:&Itemid=2457.

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