

## 2017-2018 CURRICULUM UPDATE

Welcome back! Many of you may not be aware that the summer is a very busy time in School District 103! There are a number of new curriculum initiatives underway that will bring advancements in learning to our students. Programs in our major areas of focus that will benefit students during the 2017-2018 school year are summarized below. We look forward to another great year of teaching and learning in District 103!

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### New Illinois Social Studies Standards

In December 2015, ISBE adopted the New Illinois Social Studies Standards. These standards are an adapted version of the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Standards. The vision of the New Illinois Social Studies Standards is for all Illinois graduates to be civically engaged, socially responsible, culturally aware, and financially literate. Through the new social studies standards, students will develop skills critical to success in college and careers, including creativity, critical thinking, working in diverse groups to solve complex problems, global awareness, and financial literacy. Most importantly, they will emerge with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to be informed and effective citizens.

The standards are divided into two complementary categories: inquiry skills and disciplinary concepts. Inquiry skills involve the student questioning, investigating, evaluating sources, and taking informed action; while the disciplinary concepts make use of social science ideas, principles, and content to pursue answers to the questions generated by student inquiries. Paring the two sets of standards together provides the opportunity for students to develop a deep understanding of themselves and the role they play in our local community, our state, our nation, and ancient civilizations.

For two years, the Daniel Wright Junior High School Social Studies Teachers have worked closely with middle and high school teachers within the Stevenson Consortium to ensure alignment of content and academic rigor across all 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. The elementary teachers have been analyzing how the new standards align to their current units and adjusting or rewriting units using the new standards. Due to changes that were made in order for the District 103 social studies curriculum to be aligned to the new Illinois Social Studies Standards, the Springfield trip has now been moved to 7<sup>th</sup> grade. While current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will not go on the Springfield trip, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team has begun planning a new end-of-year trip, which is more properly aligned to their current learning standards.

### Grading Practices at Daniel Wright Middle School

During the 2016-2017 school year, a committee of teachers and administrators began examining grading practices at Daniel Wright Junior High School. The purpose of this committee was to evaluate if the school's current grading practices were consistent, accurate, meaningful and supportive of learning. After completing two book studies, and attending a grading conference, the committee has decided to make a few minor changes to the school's grading procedures.

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, student behaviors will not be included in grades, points will not be taken off for late work, zeros will not be given, and students will have the opportunity to re-do assignments and tests. These changes are being made, so that grades are as pure a measure as possible of student achievement; that is, to make them reflect only student performance in mastering the course content and skills, and to more accurately report student progress to parents.

Since student behaviors as such will not be included in grades, a separate Learner Characteristics section will be added to the student report card. This section will inform parents on a student's classroom participation, preparedness, and timeliness of homework completion using the terms "consistently," "occasionally," and "rarely." Additionally, when work is not turned in on time, a "50%" will be entered as a grade with the "missing" code indicated in PowerSchool. When the work is turned in, the grade will be changed to accurately indicate the student's performance on the assignment, and the "missing" comment will be changed to "late." If a student does not turn in the work prior to the end of the quarter, then the "50%" grade will remain in place. Intervention supports will be put in place for students who chronically submit late work.

### Technology

The 1:1 Teaching and Learning program is in full swing at School District 103. As we embark upon our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of full implementation in grades 1-8, we are very excited to continue celebrating the many wonderful learning opportunities that our 1:1 learning environment supports. Our teachers and students continue to use their iPads in new and innovative ways, and we look forward to continued success.

We are also looking forward to showcasing some of the new technologies that will join the District this school year. Apple TVs, Interactive Flat Panels, classroom voice amplification systems, and upgraded Internet access are just a few that will make their way into different classrooms.

For additional information on the 1:1 Teaching and Learning Initiative, please visit the 1:1 Teaching and Learning webpage at [www.d103.org](http://www.d103.org). You can also access the webpage directly at [www.d103.org/11teachingandlearning](http://www.d103.org/11teachingandlearning).

### Resources

You can locate additional resources, including parent curriculum guides, via our webpage at [www.d103.org/curriculum](http://www.d103.org/curriculum).

