

# District 23 – Exploratory Curriculum Development 2014

## Committee Members:

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INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND  
ENGINEERING EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION



**Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

**Purpose of the Exploratory Curriculum Committee:**

The committee of administration and teachers worked collaboratively during the 2013-14 school year to evaluate current curriculum goals and materials, identify gaps, and vision for the future of these curricular areas. This will be a continuous improvement process as the standards, technologies, materials, faculty, and students are always variables in the equation. This document, however, is a starting point for curriculum planning, collaborative lesson development, and for articulation of the changing roles and function of these areas in our District.

During a time in education where standardized test scores and “Core Curriculum” seem to drive much of the conversation, this committee reaffirmed the importance of offering “exploratory” curriculum in Physical Education, Health, Art, Music, Family and Consumer Science, Spanish, and STEM Technology. We believe that in order to help all students learn and grow academically, we must also foster their artistic, creative, linguistic, kinesthetic, and collaborative capabilities. Providing a foundation in art, music and movement, as well as in foreign language and STEM subjects enables students to make appropriate choices for future courses of study in high school and college, as well as develop life long interests and skills.

This committee of professionals is to be commended for their time and dedication to reflecting, creating, and writing this update to the Exploratory curriculum in Prospect Heights School District 23.

**Visions and Values:**

Exploratory courses in District 23 provide students with broad exposure to foundational skills and content to support life long appreciation of and participation in arts and wellness activities. We believe that creativity, artistic passion, music appreciation, collaboration, cultural differences, and life long wellness are essential components of college and career readiness. Each exploratory subject’s curriculum provides a scope and sequence for content and specific skills, including reinforcement and integration of common core literacy, math and technical goals.

Art – Based on the Illinois Standards for Fine Arts Education, and the newly created National Standards for Arts Education, students learn a wide range of technical skills, gain exposure and experiences with many different media, and explore art in relation to culture. Primarily a performance based sequence, students apply what they have learned in creative and innovative ways. Balancing traditional methods and newer technology based processes, students build a foundation of art appreciation, understand foundational concepts, and connect art with other fields of study.

Family and Consumer Science – Based on the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences, students learn practical life skills in the areas of self-care, nutrition and wellness, food preparation, textiles and fashion, and consumer services. In the spirit of college and career readiness, FCS provides practice in learning and applying skills of independent living. Further, career explorations are embedded in the classroom experiences.

Industrial Arts/Science, Technology – Based on the Standards for Technological Literacy, students investigate basic design and engineering principles, in both hands on and digital formats, to gain deeper insight into the processes of design, production, and evaluation. Using modeling and practical applications, students work collaboratively to problem solve and create products that meet identified needs. Further, career explorations are embedded in the classroom experiences.

Music - Based on the Illinois Standards for Fine Arts Education, and the newly created National Standards for Arts Education, students build a foundation of music appreciation, an understanding of the structures and components of composition, and experience a wide range of performance skills. Students actively participate in the creation of music as a means of expression and cultural identity.

Physical Development/Health -

Mindful of the newly released Enhance Physical Education Task force recommendations, our current curriculum is based upon the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health. In Physical

Education classes, students progress through a continuum from practicing fundamental motor skills to building life long wellness habits. Teamwork, sportsmanship, and safety are essential elements of the physical education curriculum, embedded in a wide variety of individual skills and team games. Health curriculum is embedded in the physical education course, as well as other selected instructional settings. Our focus is on building healthy lifestyles that encourage positive social relationships and responsible choices.

Spanish – Based on the Illinois Standards for Foreign Languages, students develop an appreciation for and ability to apply the Spanish language in grades 7-8. Essential grammar, literacy, and vocabulary skills enable students to practice communication skills and make connections. Cultural appreciation and historical context are also explored as students apply their newly developed ability to read, write, and speak in Spanish.

#### Resources:

Illinois Standards for Fine Arts Education: [http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/fine\\_arts/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/fine_arts/standards.htm)

Illinois Learning Standards: Physical Development and Health

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/pdh/standards.htm>

Illinois Standards for Foreign Languages: [http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/foreign\\_languages/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/foreign_languages/standards.htm)

National Standards for Arts Education: <https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/standards>

National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences:

<http://www.nasafacs.org/national-standards-home.html>

National Standards for Technological Literacy:

<http://www.iteaconnect.org/TAA/PDFs/ListinofSTLContentStandards.pdf>