

Multnomah Education Service District

Code: IAB

Adopted: _____

LEARNING SUPPORTS TO ENHANCE ACHIEVEMENT

1. The Board of Directors resolves that components to address barriers to student learning and enhance healthy development be fully integrated with efforts to improve instruction and management/governance for instruction and be pursued as a primary and essential component of MESD education reforms in classrooms, schools, and consultation/services to component districts.
2. In keeping with the Oregon Quality Education Standards for best practices, the Board adopts the term learning supports as a unifying concept that encompasses all efforts related to addressing barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development.
3. The Board encourages and supports administrative efforts toward securing resources at the state, federal and local public level as well as private sector and philanthropic efforts to more fully fund a comprehensive system of related learning supports.
4. The Board will direct administrative efforts toward aligning, deploying and redeploying current funding and community resources related to learning support efforts in order to initiate development of comprehensive and systematic components of learning supports for schools.
5. The Board directs the Superintendent to ensure those responsible for professional and other stakeholder development throughout the District incorporate a substantial focus on learning support components into all such training and developmental activities.
6. The Board will direct administrative efforts to allocate funds in ways that fill gaps related to fully developing comprehensive and systematic components of learning supports for schools.



MULTNOMAH EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 20, 2004
To: MESD Board of Directors
From: Board Program Review Committee
Re: Policy for Learning Supports

The Program Review Committee has spent the year conducting specific reviews of elements of the MESD programs. Additionally the Committee has considered the larger question of the nature of today's learners and the role MESD plays in their education. We would like to share with members of the Board observations and findings we have made throughout the year.

1. We wish to affirm our intent to create a learning environment in which all students succeed.
2. We endorse State Superintendent Castillo's 2003-04 initiative to close the achievement gap on behalf of all students.
3. We are clear that the recently revised mission statement should be followed by all employees of the ESD.

To support our local school districts and share in providing a quality education for the children and families of our communities.

4. Further, we are committed to our vision statement that we hold for the district:

We work as a team dedicated to enhancing the learning of the communities' children by designing and delivering services responsive to family and school district needs. We strive to demonstrate leadership, wise utilization of resources, cooperative relationships with school districts and other agencies and a commitment to being a learning organization.

5. We support the following value statements upon which the mission and vision are based:
 - Children are our most important natural resource;
 - Families should be supported in education of their children;
 - Each student should reach proficiency on challenging academic standards and assessments;
 - A quality staff is essential in carrying out the mission of the agency;
 - Supportive working relationships that value diversity within the ESD are vital to achieving our mission;
 - Community partnerships maximize resources;
 - Adequate and stable financial resources are required for a quality education;
 - Interagency relationships strengthen services to children;
 - Delivering effective services to schools is a process of continuous improvement;
 - A strong system of public education is essential to the future of our society.
6. Higher standards for student performance, new instructional strategies, and a focus on results are specified as essential elements in attaining student achievement.
7. As an agency, we strive to utilize the developmental assets and strength-based approach to students and families.
8. A high proportion of students are unable to benefit fully from educational reforms because of learning barriers related to lack of engagement in the learning process for many reasons including urban poverty, poor health, community violence, domestic problems, racial and cultural tensions, substance abuse, insufficient support for transitions such as entering a new school and/or grade, insufficient home involvement in schooling, and inadequate response when learning, behavior and emotional problems first arise.
9. We recognize that teachers find it especially difficult to make progress with the high proportion of youngsters for whom barriers to learning have resulted in moderate-to-mild learning and behavior problems and even disengagement from classroom learning.

10. We believe in a balanced approach to deliver the 12 Quality Indicators for all students from the State of Oregon Quality Education Model.
11. Many of our youngsters who are referred for special services and placed in special education could have their needs met better by addressing barriers to learning through programs that prevent problems, respond to problems as soon as they arise, and promote healthy development.
12. We believe that the economic case for public funding of Early Childhood Education is clearly justified along with the efficacy of barrier reduction for children.
13. The MESD, its constituent districts and various community agencies have devoted resources to addressing learning barriers and initial processes have been well implemented to reform and restructure use of their respective resources - including exploring strategies to weave education and community efforts together – in powerful ways that can overcome key barriers to student achievement.
14. A comprehensive, integrated collaboration among all MESD support resources along with community resources will allow for development of “Components for Learning Supports” that are fully integrated with instructional efforts to effectively address barriers to learning and teaching. Properly developed and implemented, such components will enhance student achievement and reduce the achievement gap.

We therefore recommend that the MESD Board of Directors consider and adopt a Learning Supports policy.

**RESOLUTION 04-45 – Approval for Second Reading of New Board Policy IAB
(Learning Supports to Enhance Achievement)**

This resolution is for second reading for new Board Policy IAB (Learning Supports to Enhance Achievement).

Background:

The resolution is necessary for a policy on development of components of Learning Supports to enhance student achievement and reduce the achievement gap.

The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS to achieve in school, students need to be wanted and valued. They need a positive vision of the future, and

WHEREAS students require safe, orderly schools, strong community support, high-quality care, and adults they can trust, and

WHEREAS students become alienated because they may not feel worthy, they may not have a supportive home or opportunities to learn to care, or they may not be successful in handling frustrations, or have good experiences in school. They may not see relevance to their education or have positive role models or may not have access to essential supports, and

WHEREAS the MESD Board of Directors, the Superintendent, and staff need to ensure that each student can read, write, and relate effectively, has self-worth, has meaning-based learning opportunities, and has positive support networks from other students, teachers, and members of the school community, and

WHEREAS the MESD Board of Directors finds that the generalized Learning Support system and individualized student support created by comprehensive and systemic Learning Support components can give parents what they and their children and teachers want most from education--schools that provide the type of safe and caring environment that enhances student learning and reduces the achievement gap, and

WHEREAS implementation of comprehensive, integrated components for Learning Supports will serve our community by developing successful, well-educated citizens, and

WHEREAS steps should be taken to fully implement such components through alignment and redeployment of existing resources and through strategically filling gaps over time, and

MESD Board of Directors
July 20, 2004

WHEREAS the Board reviewed this policy during first reading on July 20, 2004,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Board Policy IAB is approved for Second Reading as written and adopted.