NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION CURRICULA STANDARDS IN KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
“Education is the cornerstone of our Country that can help achieve our people’s aspirations towards more progress and advancement in knowledge and science.”

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud
“We will continue investing in education and training so that our young men and women are equipped for the jobs of the future. We want Saudi children, wherever they live, to enjoy higher quality, multi-faceted education. We will invest particularly in developing early childhood education, refining our national curriculum and training our teachers and educational leaders.”

His Royal Highness
Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud
Crown Prince, Vice President of the Council of Ministers
This Framework was approved by board of directors of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission at their Sixth Meeting 1st of March 2018
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The leadership of countries is frequently judged by its level of investment in human capital. This generally starts with quality education that enables development of community values, enhances creative capabilities, promotes professionalism, and enables participation in the country’s social and economic development. These, in turn, impact on the status and power of countries and their influence on the immediate geographical area and the world at large, extending to their economies, productiveness, exports, and people’s welfare.

The Kingdom possesses many factors and leading elements that qualify it as a distinguished leader in various fields. It is the cradle of Divine Revelation and the source of Islam’s eternal message; it is the direction to which Muslims turn and exerts a strong pull on their hearts. It is also distinguished by its strategic geographic location, tremendous economic assets, and its G20 membership.

Since its establishment by the late King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud, the objective of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been to be a leader in various fields. This has been emphasized by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz: “My primary goal is for our country to be a successful, leading example in the world, in all aspects, and I will work with you to achieve that.”

Education is the most prominent anchor of the Kingdom’s leadership, as it relates to the human being, who is the goal of development and is the basis for its construction, both present and future. His Royal Highness, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, and Defense Minister, states that: “We shall only accept that our country’s future, which we are building together, is made to be at the forefront of the world’s countries through education, training, opportunities for all, and advanced services.”
The Kingdom has embarked on a journey inspired by an ambitious, futuristic vision. It considers human capital as the principle driver of economic, social, and cultural development, and the most significant contributor to switching from a diversified economy dependent on natural resources to an economy reliant on the ingenuity, creativity and productivity of its children. Excellent, quality education is the starting point of this journey. It is the first means of forming a generation that understands the country’s cultural norms and noble virtues, and that is equipped with the skills and knowledge to be competitive, be capable of acquiring national and civilizational strengths, and participate actively in the economic, social, and cultural journey of change and in the development of the economy and its diversified resources.

Curricula represent the essence of the educational process, as it contributes to forming and shaping future generations and the morals and values they should possess. They determine the skills and competencies that these generations should acquire and set standards that enable them to excel through the stages of education, in order to build their character and participation in societal development. Hence, the processes of construction, implementation and evaluation involved in the preparation of these curricula standards represent a fundamental developmental step that responds to the Kingdom’s orientations and aspirations. The standards direct the attention and efforts of all actors within the society towards their achievement by learners.

The National Framework for Public Education Curricula Standards is the first step towards developing curricula that comply with the Kingdom’s developmental ambitions. It gives rise to a number of subsequent actions, including, for example:

- building specialized frameworks for each learning area, in order to develop content standards and performance standards for each of these areas
- constructing educational materials
- providing a variety of learning resources and environments in order to achieve high expectations of learners’.

In light of the national orientations, foremost of which is the Kingdom’s Vision 2030, the Education Evaluation Commission has prepared this Framework in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other relevant bodies and has been guided by the contents of the Ministry of Education’s strategy. The Commission has also drawn upon previous national curriculum documents and international best practice in the field. The Framework has been prepared by a select group of experts and specialists from the Commission, the Ministry of Education, and Saudi universities, as well as by other relevant experts.

We ask God that this work be a solid foundation for quality education, its development, and its efficiency.
Significance of the National Framework for Public Education Curricula Standards

Countries develop national visions for their curricula in line with their well-established cultural norms, needs and requirements, future aspirations, and challenges to be overcome. Accordingly, this Framework provides a general picture for building curricula standards in the Kingdom in accordance with the Basic Law of Governance and the Kingdom’s Vision 2030, which depicts the educational, developmental, and economic orientations of the country for decades to come.

The significance of this Framework is inextricably linked to the importance of curricula and their pivotal role in fostering current and future generations and helping them achieve educational goals and objectives. This significance is highlighted in many aspects that can be summed up as follows:

1- In the Kingdom, the Framework is a fundamental document that paints an overall picture for curricula, including a comprehensive structure for the Saudi learner’s general and specialized learning experiences. It comprises values and skills that enable learners to create their present and prepare for a promising future.

2- The Framework is based on a group of pillars linked to Islam, the Arabic language, national identity, the Kingdom’s geography and history, its religious, civilizational and economic components, and its aspirations drawn from its vision, plans, and strategies. It is also based on the fundamental requirements of education and knowledge in the present and the horizons of knowledge and technology in the future.

3- The Framework reflects the foundations, foci, and objectives on which the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 is based. The vision and its objectives revolve around pride in religion, identity, moderation, avoidance of extremes, positivity, continuous development of capabilities, and acquisition of skills and competencies. The Framework determines the values, skills, and experiences that a Saudi learner should in order to contribute to the country’s programs and objectives and efficiently fulfil its vision.
4- The Framework takes into consideration modern global trends that emphasize the learner’s role in building knowledge and skills, and the education system’s role in providing a safe learning environment supportive of creativity, and diverse educational resources that cater for individual differences. It considers modern trends in organizing educational experiences across the curriculum, in accordance with the nature of each learning area, the needs and experiences of the learner, practical requirements, and the generational characteristics.

5- The Framework takes into account the increasingly rapid scientific and technological advancements and the emergence of a new generation that is automatically reliant on technology. Therefore, it prepares learners to face a fourth industrial revolution based on fast, highly advanced digital technologies that require them to acclimatize to rapid changes, and shape new outlooks for learning, creativity, innovation, and productivity, in accordance with the latest theories of knowledge.

6- The Framework provides space for specialists to be creative in designing curriculum that offers the best options and achieves the desired learning.

7- The Framework paves the way for building a system of standards that specify what the learner should learn, understand, and be able to do. The standards should contribute towards guiding the education sector to focus on the quality of its outcomes, designing diverse educational resources, and determining desired aspects of teacher professional development and programs for teacher training.
Objectives of the National Framework for Public Education Curricula Standards

The Framework, in general, is intended to serve as a theoretical and procedural reference document to build, implement, and evaluate the curricula standards. Its sub-objectives are to:

- Provide an intellectual perspective to build curricula standards that satisfy societal needs and aspirations, based on the latest educational trends
- Present a vision for curricula standards, with ensuing general objectives
- Specify the structure of curricula standards, learning areas, and levels of learning
- Present the guiding principles for educational curricula standards
- Ensure consistency between the components of specialized frameworks and curricula standards (within learning areas)
- Specify stakeholder roles and responsibilities and implementation requirements
Foundations for developing the Public Education Curricula Standards

The foundations represent the main pillars for building, implementing, and evaluating curricula standards in the Kingdom. The education system emerges from these pillars, psychologically, academically, socially, and economically, in accordance with the Basic Law of Governance, and to achieve the state’s orientations. These foundations are:

Islam

Islam is the religion of the state and includes doctrine, legislation, culture, and ethics, as well as religious duties, acts of worship, and social interactions. The Holy Qur’an and the Prophet Muhammad’s Sunnah form the Kingdom’s constitution. The Basic Law of Governance emphasizes “the education of individuals based on the Islamic doctrine and ensuing loyalty and obedience to Allah, His Prophet, and the rulers, as well as respect for the rule of law and compliance therewith, and love for the nation.”

Because of this strong bond between Islam and the Kingdom, the Islamic faith represents the first pillar in building curricula standards. Emerging prominently from this connection are aspects of the pillars of Islam, namely belief and perfection of belief, including its goals and objectives, and the moderation that represents Islam’s avoidance of extremes and tolerance. Manifest also are self-purification, piety, living up to Islamic values and ethics, the principles of ease and facilitation, leniency towards creation, mercy, compassion, benevolence, truth, and beauty. Islam’s emphasis on the values of citizenship, stewardship of the earth, and promoting the mind is also highlighted.
The Arabic language has been chosen by Allah as the language of the Holy Qur’an, thus giving it strength and durability. It is the basis for building curricula standards (except for those associated with learning another language). Arabic is one of the components of the Kingdom’s identity to be protected and to be proud of. It is a tool for communication, acquisition of learning skills, and thinking in the learning areas and in life.

Loyalty to the state country and its leadership
Loyalty to the state and its leadership constitutes a basis for building curricula standards, thus affirming good citizenship, consolidating love of and loyalty to the state and its leadership, and enhancing national unity. This ties in with the meanings and indicators of the concept of allegiance to the state’s leadership and the consequent religious and national duties that require rallying around the leadership and appreciating responsibilities to serve the religion, state, citizens, and sacred places. Most prominent are aspects connected with the significance of the Kingdom’s Arab-Islamic depth, Islamic and regional leadership, and global, political, and economic status. The consequent pride, sense of belonging, and desire to give and be productive contribute to building the society, developing and preserving the state’s assets, and defending its interests, as well as creating awareness of one’s rights and duties. Other prominent features include strengthening social cohesion, rejecting fanaticism and discrimination, and promoting social solidarity and volunteering.

Kingdom’s geography and history
The Kingdom’s strategic geographic location, history, and archeology represent important dimensions in building the people of the Kingdom and strengthening their sense of belonging to the state and its roots. The Kingdom’s geography and history are considered a basis for building the curricula standards. Focus is placed in particular on the way these have combined to create a civilization rich with knowledge, monuments, traditions, and values, as well as Saudi social and cultural life, literature, and arts.

The Kingdom’s Vision 2030
Vision 2030 outlines the Kingdom’s future. Its strength and objectives constitute a strategic base on which to build the curricula standards in order to prepare young people for the future and enable them to acquire the values, skills, and competencies necessary to build an lively society, a flourishing economy, and an ambitious country. What also emerges is the importance of bolstering the Saudi identity and its associated values and skills, and the consequent development of the social, intellectual, and employment capabilities of the Saudi citizen.

Characteristics of growth
Constructing a holistic learner identity, developing learners’ capabilities, and refining their skills and competencies are bases for building the curricula standards, in line with the stages of growth and learning styles, to maximize self-realization, promote self-confidence, and assist in fulfilling hopes, attaining aspirations, succeeding in life, serving the religion and the country, and protecting against
intellectual threats. Salient in this connection are the characteristics of growth and its requirements at successive age stages and the learners’ needs, interests, and orientations, as well as issues of growth and how to deal with them.

Educational trends and practices
Cognitive orientations, educational theories, global best practices in curricula implementation, and the latest research into psychology, neuroscience and the way learning takes place in the brain are the basis for the construction of the curricula standards. Prominent within this basis are the principles of cognitive and developmental teaching and learning and their application, which regard the learner as the center of teaching, learning, and assessment. Such theories are focused on active learning that enables learners to discover and develop their interests and capabilities, building meaning and deep understanding, connecting educational experiences to reality, and empowering them to acquire the skills and competencies required for success, socially and professionally.

Knowledge and technological transformations
Knowledge and technological transformations are another basis for building the curricula standards. Such transformations are characterized by rapid growth in various technological capabilities and considerable development in their numerous fields, such as computer processing, massive data storage, data messaging, programming, algorithms, and artificial intelligence. These have given birth to a major industrial revolution (the Fourth Industrial Revolution), driven by various factors that are characterized by renewed and continuous change, and its impact on the capabilities of individuals and communities, and the competitiveness of countries. These accelerated knowledge and technological transformations require flexibility in building curricula standards, to cope with the rapid changes by equipping learners with the knowledge, values, and skills that will empower them to interact with, utilize, and build on the informational trends and safeguard against associated risks.

Public health
Promoting public health and supporting its various aspects is a basis for building curricula standards, to create a suitable health environment that encourages learner’s health culture, including its psychological, physical, and social levels, prevention of diseases, and security and safety. Focused on in this connection are physical and sporting activities, healthy eating habits, public and individual hygiene, and psychological and mental health.

Human co-existence
The Kingdom places high importance on the principles of human co-existence and international security and peace, as these build positive global partnerships and serve humanity. It commits itself to international conventions and norms, and supports the principles of dialogue, peace, and understanding among followers of divine faiths and global cultures. These commitments are reflected in the curricula standards, which focus on developing human interactions based on collaborative relationships, consolidating cultural and civic communication, opening up Islamic civilization to other cultures, and accepting diversity and difference among people, in religion, thinking, behavior, and their nature, as a part of God’s universal ways.
Vision of the Public Education Curricula Standards

“Learners who are proud of their religion and language, are contributors to their nation’s development, possess a constructive and balanced personality, and are creative and productive.”

The vision of the curricula standards is achieved through the four general objectives that aim for learners to be:

Proud of their religion and language, which subsumes the following sub-objectives:

- Having faith in Allah as their Lord, Islam as their religion, and Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as their Prophet.
- Understanding Islam correctly, in terms of doctrine, acts of worship, and social interactions.
- Being moderate and avoiding extremes and adopting Islamic values and ethics.
- Mastering the four skills of the Arabic language, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Taking pride in the Arabic language as a tool for communication and as a vehicle for knowledge and the intellect.
Constructive and balanced in their personality, which subsumes the following sub-objectives:

- Being self-confident and practicing self-censorship.
- Showing initiative, determination, perseverance, discipline, mastery, and productivity.
- Being optimistic and building future aspirations.
- Communicating positively with others and possessing the etiquette and skills of dialogue.
- Being flexible and capable of acclimatizing to new situations.
- Working independently and collaboratively, and working as a team.
- Being courteous and compliant with public taste.
- Developing physical skills and following well-balanced, healthy life-styles.
- Assuming social and economic responsibility, which assists in making appropriate decisions.
- Showing mutual tolerance, regulating emotions, respecting the rights of others, and accepting them for who they are.

Contributors to their nation’s development, which subsumes the following sub-objectives:

- Displaying a sense of belonging to the nation and being loyal to it and its leadership.
- Appreciating the country’s components, history, and status, within the Arab world as well as Islamically and globally.
- Showing an understanding of cultural backgrounds and sectarian differences, to maintain national cohesion.
- Assuming responsibility towards the country, preservation of its assets and gains, and consolidation of its unity.
- Contributing to societal development and being aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- Being able to deal with and positively participate in family affairs and in local and international communities.
- Working towards and contributing to the Kingdom’s welfare, socially, culturally, economically, and environmentally.
- Showing respect for and protecting the environment to ensure its development and sustainability.
Creative and productive, which subsumes the following sub-objectives:

- Mastering basic knowledge and skills connected with reading and writing, and numerical, digital, and information skills.
- Mastering knowledge and skills in areas of learning that offer multiple options in the future, educationally and professionally.
- Learning in a self-directed manner, being passionate for knowledge, and acquiring lifelong learning strategies.
- Being well-versed in technological and digital culture and the media.
- Demonstrating positive and constructive competitiveness at all levels.
- Developing thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Accessing, absorbing, utilizing, and producing knowledge.
- Planning for life and being immersed in entrepreneurial culture.
Supported by the three dimensions (i.e., curriculum priorities, values, and skills), the academic structure of the learning areas is regarded as the basic dimension for building the public education curricula standards. These dimensions mesh with each other in accordance with the comprehensive learning system. These are integrated within each learning area, each according to its content and nature, and are intended to support learning and deep understanding of learning area content. The structure adheres to the guiding principles of curriculum content, teaching and learning processes, assessment, and information and communication technologies, thus fulfilling the vision of the curricula standards. The structure consists of the following components:

1. Learning areas
2. Curriculum priorities
3. Values
4. Skills
Learning areas

The learning areas are the specializations with which the learner engages. The content of each learning area comprises the area’s specialized knowledge, and the curriculum priorities, values, and skills. These learning areas are organized in two components:

a. Core learning areas

These are specialized areas studied by all learners as appropriate to levels and grades of education. For each area, the associated content is specified in a document that outlines the specialized framework for building the curricula standards. The specialized areas are:

- Islamic education
- Arabic language
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social studies
- English language
- Digital technologies
- Art education
- Health education

b. Elective learning area

This is a flexible learning area that provides various elective options such as academic, skills-based, applied, or vocational programs. These enhance the opportunities for learners to study in an area of special interest, acquire a skill, or undertake experiences that are suitable for their level and specialization pathway, at the Expansion Level (Grades 7-9) and the Focus Level (Grades 10-12).

These options cover aspects of new knowledge associated with transformations in economic, social, intellectual, and technical environments, and in the applied sciences. The options allow more flexibility for education departments, schools, or learners to meet specific needs and interests within the specialized frameworks’ elective programs.
Curriculum priorities

Curriculum priorities outline national orientations and the major themes to be prioritized in society. Such priorities must be present in the learning areas in the coming years and linked to the well-being and progress of the Kingdom. They guide the building, implementation, and assessment of the curricula standards by way of being systematically included in all learning areas and across levels and grades of education. These priorities are targeted through quality learning experiences that include knowledge, values, and skills that cohere with each other and are integrated within the academic structure of each learning area. The priorities that must be targeted by all learning areas through efforts directed across levels and grades are:

The elective learning area consolidates learners’ capacity to examine the available options, select the most suitable ones, and develop their intellectual, skills and vocational capacities that match their passion for knowledge, inclinations, needs, and the development of their subsequent vocational and educational orientations. The content of each elective program is specified within the specialized framework of this program.
Responsible citizenship

Responsible citizenship is defined as learners’ loyalty to the country and its leadership, adoption of the attributes of a balanced and ambitious Saudi personality, participation in building and protecting the country’s assets, gains, and savings, pride in and contribution to its achievements, and protection of its resources. Such citizenship is evident in social solidarity and supports the society’s cohesion, strength, and vitality, stemming from its well-established values, populated environment, and solid structure. This priority focuses on:

1- Loyalty to the country and its leadership and a sense of belonging.
2- Conscious citizenship based on knowledge of rights and fulfilment of duties.
3- The family and the enhancement of its vital roles in education and social development.
4- The country and the protection of its assets, gains, and savings, and pride in and contribution to its achievements.
5- National heritage.

The Kingdom’s status and leading role

This priority is achieved through developing learners’ awareness of the Kingdom’s status in the hearts of Arabs and Muslims, its leading role, and its Arab-Islamic depth. The priority focuses on:

1- The strategic significance of the Kingdom’s status in the Arab world, as well as Islamically and globally.
2- The Kingdom’s global leading position in various fields and the pride it takes in its achievements.
3- The Kingdom’s efforts in serving the Two Holy Mosques and their Hajj and Umrah guests, and developing a sense of responsibility towards them.
4- The Kingdom’s geographic position at the center of the world and at the crossroads of global trade routes.
5- The Kingdom’s efforts in promoting the values of avoidance of extremes, moderation, tolerance, communication between countries, dialogue, global peace, and understanding between cultures.
6- The Kingdom’s attractive and competitive capabilities.
Sustainable development

Sustainable development is achieved by preparing learners for a flourishing future based on improving quality of life for all and ensuring its sustainability socially, economically, and environmentally. It considers the balance between these dimensions, to meet the needs of the present and preserve assets for future generations. This priority focuses on:

1- Investment in and empowerment of national talents and their capacities to contribute to the promotion of their society.
2- The required skills for future employment, including creativity and innovation, leadership, and financial and economic planning.
3- Investment in the development of a culture of showing initiative, productivity and entrepreneurship, to achieve overall economic prosperity.
4- Empowerment of women, so that they have suitable opportunities to build their future and progress their society and its economy.
5- National and international expertise, and using these in multiple paths of development.
6- Maintenance of public health, with a focus on prevention, security, safety, balanced personal health practices, and participation in various sporting activities.
7- The practices of protecting and improving the environment, its components, and natural resources, acknowledging the challenges it faces and participating in finding solutions to its problems.
Values

The curricula standards underscore the need to equip learners with a system of values that enable them to fulfil their ambitions for a decent, full of happiness, peace and productivity. These values enhance learners’ sense of belonging to their religion, country, and leadership, as well as their awareness of national identity, commitment to justice and moderation, respect for others, and readiness to support their country’s ambitious vision through its aims, themes, objectives, and ensuing social and economic transformations. The values are:

- **Piety**

  This value encourages learners to strengthen their religious adherence, purify themselves through love, hope, and fear of Allah, abide by His dictates, and follow these in faith, worship, deeds, and words. Some of its manifestations include beneficence, forbearance, integrity, honesty, devotion, mercy, altruism, cooperation, and generosity.
Avoidance of extremes and moderation

This value encourages learners to adhere to the Islamic approach, which is based on non-extreme and moderate thought, incorporating tolerance, ease, flexibility, justice, equality, leniency, and acceptance of and co-existence with others.

Self-esteem

This value encourages learners to respect, accept, and look after themselves, build self-confidence, contentment, and tranquility, elevate themselves to their fullest potential, have an optimistic and ambitious outlook on life and the future, and feel successful and distinguished.

Passion for knowledge

This value encourages learners to have respect for knowledge in its all forms and persevere in seeking it, through dedicated reading and research. It will foster curiosity, as learners explore, assimilate, produce knowledge, and develop understanding and ways of thinking, such that seeking of knowledge becomes a way of life.

Appreciation and mastery of work

This value encourages learners to appreciate serious endeavor, dedication, diligence, discipline, and quality of practice, helping them build professional ethics, work values, integrity, truthfulness, honesty, innovation, and excellence.

Responsibility

This value encourages learners to fulfil obligations and duties, grasp their meanings and consequences, and assume responsibilities for themselves, their family, community, environment, and country as well as its institutions. They learn to respect and abide by regulations and comply with public taste.
Skills

Skills comprise a set of cognitive, emotional, and motor abilities that prepare the learner for life in all its complexity and for dealing constructively with the economic, technological, and intellectual transformations witnessed by the Kingdom and the world at large. The curricula standards emphasize learners’ mastery of the necessary skills and competencies, including those of the 21st century, which enable them to enjoy continuous and lifelong learning and become creative, innovative, and productive. These skills also allow them to actively partake in fulfilling their country’s vision and contribute to its programs and objectives. They prepare them for the jobs of the future and its intellectual and technological prospects and challenges, through quality learning experiences that are integrated in the academic structure of each learning area. These skills are:

- Critical thinking and problem-solving

This skill refers to the learner’s ability to think, observe, and evaluate using the rules of reasoning, to make decisions, solve problems, and make logical judgments based on data and evidence collection, analysis, integrity, and validity.
This skill focuses on the learner’s ability to produce original ideas, innovative solutions, and diverse alternatives closely linked with challenge, discovery, innovation, prediction and exploitation of opportunities, and awareness of problems and how to deal with them by using knowledge and skills of scientific imagination in productive and unconventional ways.

**Communication**

This skill develops the learner’s ability to exchange information, opinions, and feelings with individuals and groups, and convey ideas verbally and non-verbally. Using this skill, the learner interacts positively and competently in communicative situations by means of respect, effective listening, dialogue, understanding and acceptance of others’ views and opinions, and promotion of human values that call for the development and enrichment of human civilization.

**Use of technologies**

This skill focuses on the learner’s ability to use digital technologies, including its many forms and media. Students learn to exchange, manage, and produce data in multiple formats, and then analyze and evaluate it, and absorb the transformations in knowledge, technologies, and information media.

**Self-learning**

This skill refers to the learner’s ability to persist in self-motivated research and inquiry, and in learning how to learn. By understanding and identifying objectives, choosing the appropriate learning method, finding the necessary resources, and utilizing technologies, learners develop the capacity to analyze and assimilate new knowledge and contribute to its production.

**Collaboration and community participation**

This skill refers to the learner’s ability to work successfully with and support others, while contributing productively, and with respect, to the completion of team tasks that improve the quality of life and the environment.

The curriculum priorities work in conjunction with the values and skills to build, implement, and assess the curricula standards, by way of being systematically included (directly and indirectly) in all areas of learning, and by emphasizing their progressive development in learners. The curriculum priorities, values, and skills also increase learners’ capacity to take part in scientific and technological transformations and to creatively solve their problems and those of their community and the world at large.
Levels of learning

The curricula standards are built for all learning areas and span across the levels and grades of public education, in conformity with learners’ growth characteristics and their requirements, and the nature and structure of each learning area. The emphasis is on building learning experiences across levels based on the learner’s previous experiences. These levels are organized as follows:

1- Public education starts at kindergarten and ends at the 12th grade. The school grades are divided into four educational levels: Foundation, Reinforcement, Expansion, and Focus.

2- The first three levels are characterized by shared features, whereby learning experiences and content gradually increase in terms of cognitive demand and complexity. The fourth level (10th to 12th grade) is characterized by a focus on specific learning areas that allow for a greater degree of specialization.

3- To fulfil the vision of the curricula standards, the learning areas, actual teaching hours, and their relative weights are determined according to learners’ characteristics and the nature of each of the four educational levels.
4- At the fourth educational level, various tracks focusing on academic or applied fields can be introduced, provided that these meet the following:

- their fulfilment of what is stated in the vision of the curricula standards
- their selection is based on the development needs in the Kingdom and outstanding educational practices.

5- At the fourth educational level, the learner is allowed to choose a focus track from among the several pathways provided (e.g., the combined pathway, the sciences pathway, the humanities pathway, etc.).

6- Learning areas are distributed:

- Across all pathways, in addition to the learning areas required by the focus pathway
- In an elective area that gives diversified opportunities to enhance advanced learning in the focus pathway or to suit the learner’s inclinations and interests.
These guidelines are the main determinants of the curricula standards, ensuring fulfilment of the vision of the standards and their optimal implementation and assessment. The guidelines are represented by the following: principles of curriculum content; principles of teaching and learning processes; principles of information and communication technologies; and principles of assessment.

The principles of public education curricula content

The curricula standards emphasize the fulfilment of the following curriculum content principles:
Balance
Learning area content is developed according to the scope and sequence matrices, to achieve a balanced presentation of its goals, content, and vision, and enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values of each learning area.

Connectedness
The content connects the pivotal ideas and main ideas and makes the relationship between these and the cross-cutting dimensions (curriculum priorities, values, skills) explicit, both horizontally and vertically across educational levels and grades within each learning area and its branches. Each learning area explicitly connects activities and experiences to the learner’s life, needs, and growth characteristics.

Complementarity and consistency
The incorporation of the curriculum priorities, values and skills in learning areas highlights consistency across learning areas and so demonstrates their complementarity as well as promoting deep learning.

Comprehensiveness
The content is comprehensive because it emphasizes equal opportunities for all learners through use of various activities that suit learner diversity. Content is built to accommodate individual differences, different learning styles, and multiple intelligences, and its design considers gifted learners and those with special needs.

Flexibility
Flexibility allows for many options in design and implementation, including the benefits of digital technologies and their multiple resources. The content suits all learners’ needs, interests, and capabilities, and acknowledges the individual differences among them.

Focus and depth
The content of the learning areas is built with a focus on pivotal ideas and main ideas, paying attention to given to quality and accessibility of knowledge rather than quantity. This leads to the development of deep understanding and meaningful learning. Cumulative knowledge and research are objectively considered in content selection, which leads to the provision of quality learning experiences that stimulate thinking and the use of non-routine problem-solving and higher-order thinking skills.
**High expectations**
Learning area content balances high expectations of all learners with provision of challenging learning activities and experiences. The high expectations are linked by experiences that prepare learners for future jobs and enable them to understand the variables of time, the ongoing scientific and technological transformations, and their embodiment in the context of the learning area content.

**Connection to reality**
The content provides learning experiences characterized by the capacity to connect what students learn to real-life applications and enable them to interact with authentic situations and everyday problems they encounter outside school. These experiences encourage learners to deepen their knowledge and to develop their skills through activities, experimentation, research, inferencing, and community participation.

**The principles of teaching and learning processes**
The curricula standards emphasize the fulfilment of the following principles of teaching and learning processes:
The learner is active and positive
The teaching and learning processes are based on the needs of the learner and use learning methods and experiences by planning for, implementing, and enjoying the practice. Learners are leaders of their own learning process, which takes into consideration their nature, growth characteristics, abilities, needs, and interests, to build deep understanding of knowledge and to implement it in multiple contexts and new real-life situations.

Meaningful learning
Learning is based on situations, experiences, and activities that are meaningful to the learner and in which new experiences are linked to previous experiences and to the contexts of life and the community, thus increasing learners’ passion for knowledge and posing some challenge to their abilities.

Education for all learners
The curricula standards emphasize that all learners have the capacity to learn in accordance with their capabilities, needs, interests, and gender. Therefore, equal opportunities must be made available to all learners, and teaching and learning activities must be diversified to take into account learners’ individual differences, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and needs, with attention to gifted learners and those with special needs.

Quality and excellence
Teaching and learning emphasize quality of process in line with international best practices and standards in teaching, learning, and assessment. The process utilizes multiple inputs to achieve the highest expectations of learners.

Positive learning environment
Emphasis is placed on providing a learning environment that is safe and based on positive relations, mutual respect, and acceptance of others, and that acts as an incubator for creativity, thus increasing the learning opportunities of learners of different abilities.

Encouraging thinking and inquiry
Learning areas use teaching methods and strategies that develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. These include teaching to the whole class, offering cooperative group learning activities, participating in field work, and engaging in practical applications and experiments that promote inquiry and independent study.
Principles of information and communication technologies

The standards of educational curricula emphasize the implementation of the following principles of information and communication technologies:

- **Utilizing technology in teaching and learning**: This is concerned with making available multiple options for the diverse applications of technology, open-access resources, and interactive software, to enrich the direct learning environments, e-learning and its applications, and virtual environments, and enable learners to communicate with various learning sources.

- **Integrating technologies into the content of the learning areas**: The technological content and its related skills are an essential part of the content of the learning areas, as these support the academic structure of the learning area, and play a key role in building, implementing, assessing, and developing the curricula standards. Because of this, appropriate technologies, and the skills required to use them, should be directly targeted and taught when these are to be used within learning areas.

Principles of assessment

The curricula standards emphasize the fulfilment of the following principles of assessment:
Planning for assessment
Emphasis is placed on planning for the assessment process according to the learning objectives, making sure that these are clear and shared with learners, and adjusting the teaching and learning plans in light of assessment results.

Diversity of assessment methods
Assessment methods should be diversified, to take into account individual differences between learners and their learning styles and to give due importance to the actual assessment methods that are most suitable for the content of the standards.

Validity and consistency of assessment methods
It should be ascertained that assessment methods are valid and consistent in order to raise confidence in assessment results and the soundness of ensuing decisions, especially when the assessment results are used for summative purposes that entail such decisions as the learner’s promotion to the next grade level.

Assessment is a continuous process
It should be emphasized that assessment is inherent to the learning processes. It provides feedback to learners on the extent of their progress to achieve the learning objectives. To accomplish this, the principles of assessment for learning and its strategies must be implemented.

Learner as a partner in the assessment processes
Emphasis is placed on learners’ participation in formative assessment processes and on the utilization of assessment strategies to increase their motivation, self-confidence, and achievement.

Performance measurement reports
Emphasis is placed on developing an assessment system to report on learners’ progress against the performance standards of learning areas. Preparation of specific reports that show learners’ performance level and their progress is key to assessment in learning areas. The reports function as benchmarks and include specific recommendations about learning levels, substantiated by examples of these levels from the content standards.

Utilizing assessment results in developing the educational system
Emphasis is placed on analyzing data from national and international exams, determining the effectiveness of the curricula standards in developing student learning, utilizing the results of the data analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of the education system, and setting up interventions to improve these outcomes.
Implementation requirements of the Public Education Curricula Standards

The curricula standards emphasize the fact that the learner is the center of teaching, learning and assessment, the basis from which these processes emerge, and the main benchmarks of their quality in accordance with the guiding principles for building, implementing, and assessing the standards of educational curricula. This requires the following:

Continuing teacher professional development

The implementation of the curricula standards requires provision of technical support and qualitative programs for pre-service teacher education and teacher professional development. The standards implementation processes require the following from teacher professional development programs:

1. Ability to understand the academic construct of the curricula standards in the area of specialization, the targeted values, skills, and priorities, the guiding principles, how to analyze the content of these standards, and the targeted level of depth according to educational levels and grades.
2. Capacity to utilize multiple approaches and teaching and learning strategies, and to diversify these in conformity with the curricula standards and the developmental characteristics of learners and their requirements.

3. Ability to plan instructional modules in light of the curricula standards and their implementation, and the use of educational materials, various learning resources, and technologies and their applications in learning environments, taking into account how students learn and the age-group characteristics according to targeted levels and grades.

4. Capacity to utilize and diversify various formative assessment approaches and methods, assessment for learning, and summative assessment, to analyze assessment results, use these to improve student learning and teacher performance, and to make appropriate educational decisions about learner progress and enrichment and remedial programs.

**Harmonization between education system components and standards implementation**

Implementation of the curricula standards requires harmonization of education system’s components, including the curricula, educational materials, learning resources, learning environments within and outside of educational institutions, teaching and learning processes and their accompanying activities, assessment systems, reports, and other components and factors that directly influence students’ learning and their achievement of the curricula standards. This requires:

1. **School performance assessment criteria**
   Implementation of the curricula standards requires that school performance criteria and assessment tools are compatible with the curricula standards and associated components, such as teaching materials, resources, learning environments, teaching and learning processes, and performance assessment systems. Such compatibility will lead to assessing the level of support offered by these schools to achieve target standards for learners, provide feedback about the quality of the implementation of the standards within the school, and give suggestions for improvement.

2. **Curriculum and educational program assessment criteria**
   Implementation of the curricula standards requires evaluative studies and analytical tools to assess the content of teaching materials, learning resources, and educational programs, such as gifted, special, and adult education, in light of the curricula standards. It is necessary to ascertain whether these are consistent with the standards and whether they provide precise data and benchmarks, as well as recommendations for improvement to decision-makers and educational leaders on the quality of curricula and educational programs implemented in schools.
3. Professional standards for teachers and school leadership
Implementation of the curricula standards requires that the professional standards for teachers and school leadership are compatible with the curricula standards and that links are created between these to form a shared vision about teaching and learning processes and their characteristics. This ensures they are able to meet these standards, analyze their learners’ results to improve learning, and submit recommendations for improvement.

4. National exams
Implementation and evaluation of the curricula standards require giving feedback on students’ learning level. This necessitates constructing national exams to assess the degree to which learners have assimilated the knowledge, values, and skills embodied in the targeted level or grade. This enables comparison of results using international performance benchmarks to assess the quality of these standards and the quality of the education system and its development.
Options for implementing the Public Education Curricula Standards

The curricula standards emphasize flexible implementation and availability of multiple options to design, assess, develop, and creatively present curricula. This involves the use of various strategies, educational materials, and learning resources that are not restricted to textbooks. This will achieve quality education for all learners of different abilities, interests, and attitudes, as well as fulfil their highest expectations. Examples of types of materials and resources include:

1. Open educational resources and their applications, including open educational platforms, digital libraries, and e-materials that allow the exchange of knowledge and digital content, in line with the culture of the Saudi community and the Kingdom’s laws, policies, and vision.

2. Hybrid books and their multiple visual, kinesthetic, and auditory representations that model complex operations in learning areas, such as environmental changes, chemical reactions, photosynthesis, and metabolism.

3. Interactive educational software and their applications, such as modeling and simulation software, animated pictures, educational games, GPS and mapping programs, engineering software, and graphic computers that model abstract concepts.

4. Extra-curricular activities to expand learning experiences outside the classroom, such as educational trips, participation in volunteer service, and awareness-raising activities and programs.

5. Tools, support resources, and supporting educational materials, including multi-level educational materials, labs and their equipment, virtual environments, and multi-purpose tools such as educational robots and virtual reality tools.
Achievement of the curricula standards is a collective responsibility that requires partnership between all those involved in teaching, learning, and assessment processes, and those associated with building, implementing, and developing the curricula standards, including decision-makers, educational leaders, and associated authorities (such as the Education Evaluation Commission, Ministry of Education, universities, colleges of education, and teachers). The roles are as follows:

The roles of the Education Evaluation Commission are defined as:

- Constructing the curricula standards according to levels and grades of education.
- Assessing implementation of the curricula standards, including evaluation of the level of students’ learning and performance in light of these standards.
- Constructing national exams in light of the performance standards, to provide feedback to decision-makers and bodies concerned with assessment, development, and the community.
- Continuously developing and updating the curricula standards.

The roles of the Ministry of Education are defined as:

- Building educational materials and designing experiences and learning situations in light of the curricula standards.
Developing academic programs consistent with the requirements of implementing standards-based curricula.

Developing teacher preparation programs and admission policies at colleges of education, to ascertain their ability to meet the requirements of the curricula standards.

Developing the assessment system for learners to ensure achievement of the high expectations of the curricula standards.

Providing a safe learning environment, learning resources, educational materials and equipment, to fulfil the requirements of curricula standards implementation.

Encouraging flexible implementation of the curricula standards in schools so that these schools can serve as incubators for development, creativity, and excellence.

The roles of universities and colleges of education are defined as:

- Developing academic programs consistent with the requirements of implementing standards-based curricula.
- Developing teacher preparation programs and admission policies at colleges of education, to ascertain their ability to meet the requirements of the curricula standards.

The roles of teachers are defined as:

- Thoroughly understanding the curricula standards, their dimensions and implementation, and how to deal with these standards.
- Selecting the resources and the effective teaching, learning, and assessment strategies that will enable learners to maximize their potential for quality learning and positive outcomes at all levels.
- Participating in the evaluation and development of the curricula standards.
To Communicate

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- Evaluation of Education
- National FrameWork of the standards of the Public Education Curricula in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia