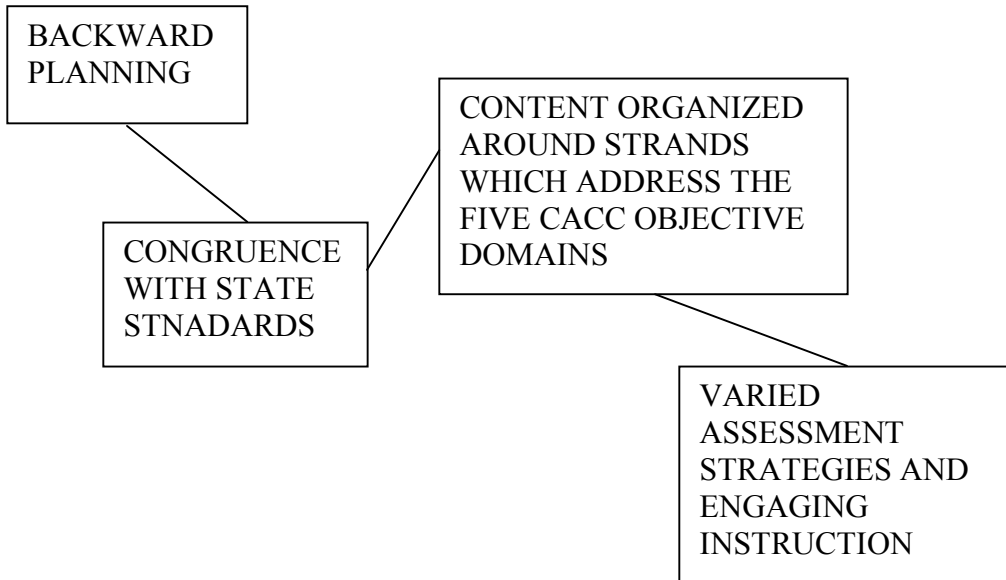


# CALIFORNIA CADET CORPS CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION

17 September 2004

The enclosed California Cadet Corps Curriculum is predicated upon a theoretical framework with four premises:



**1. BACKWARD PLANNING:** The Backward Planning Design process was designed by Rick Stiggins and Jay McTighe. (See their text, *Understanding by Design for more information*) and its resource page at <http://www.ubdexchange.org/>. In this process, curriculum design begins with identifying what students should know and be able to do at the end of the instruction. The process then requires the design of varied assessments which determine the extent to which students know and can do what was identified in the first part of the process. Backward Planning concludes with the design of engaging instruction which prepares students for success on those varied assessments. The California Cadet Corps curriculum uses this process by beginning with rigorous expectations for cadets' knowledge and skill. Assessments were designed to evaluate mastery of those expectations. Instructional resources were then designed to prepare cadets for success on those assessments.

**2. CONGRUENCE WITH STATE STANDARDS:** California State Content Standards in Health, Science, Physical Education, Social Science, Language Arts, English Language Development, and Mathematics are embedded in the content and activities of the enclosed curriculum. See <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/> for specific standards and frameworks.

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**3. CONTENT ORGANIZED AROUND STRANDS:** This curriculum is organized into units termed “strands” which are designed to last 5-15 or more school days in duration depending on the grade level and maturity of the cadets being instructed. Each strand consists of class sessions which address all five domains found in the CACC objectives.

## **4. VARIED ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES AND ENGAGING INSTRUCTION:**

The enclosed curriculum embraces the following “best practices” for teaching and learning:

### **+ Cooperative Learning**

Researchers have long recognized the importance of active student involvement in the learning process -- the old adage there is no better way to learn something than to teach it, is a maxim that underpins many cooperative learning approaches. There is considerable variability from approach to approach regarding effects of cooperative learning on student achievement. The characteristics of the most effective approaches are "group reward", "individual accountability", and "task structure" (see Slavin, R. E. "Synthesis of Research on Grouping in Elementary and Secondary Schools." Educational Leadership 46/1 (September 1988b): 67-77.). Cooperative learning has also been shown to have positive effects on students' social growth and in facilitating interaction between students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. In the Cadet program, the core of cooperative structure is the squad. Under the direction of squad leaders, squads are the perfect structure for cooperative learning.

### **+ Peer Mediation and Tutoring**

Peer mediation and peer tutoring have been used effectively with students across all ability spectrums and have reciprocal benefits for tutors and tutees alike. The characteristics of effective tutoring approaches mirror those of effective cooperative learning approaches. In the Cadet Corps program, we should be requiring squad leaders to be peer mediators and tutors in support of all aspects of the Cadet curriculum.

### **+ Direct/Explicit Teaching**

Direct teaching is another tried and true practice that has been shown consistent results in classrooms over a long period of time. Good direct teaching is the foundation of other teaching approaches like cooperative learning. Unlike lecturing, quality direct teaching includes review, modeling, guided and independent practice. For direct teaching to be effective all of these elements must be present. Direct teaching in the Cadet Corps program includes whole class direct teaching by commandant personnel AND similar whole group and small group instruction by competent cadet leaders.

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## **Information Technology**

Information technology is the tool of great promise in education with growing evidence of positive effects on student learning. High levels of accessibility and genuine curricular embedding are fundamental to the realization of the potential of information technology in schools. In the Cadet program specifically, I believe this includes such things as access to the internet for research on the history and current status of military leadership, access to fitness and healthy-lifestyle software, regular use of study skill software, and the use of digital videography for drill and ceremonies instruction and practice.

## **Reward and Reinforcement**

Probably the most researched educational practice with the most consistent results and large effects on student achievement is the consistent use of rewards and reinforcement. Structured reward and reinforcement is a part of all effective organizations. In the CACC, this concept is embodied in the rank structure and the awards and decorations program, which provide cadets with the opportunity to be recognized for their contributions to the community and their personal growth as students and citizens of the school.

## **Cognitive Strategy Learning**

This involves teaching cadets to recognize the salient elements in learning tasks and to monitor their own performance in relation to those tasks. In this instruction, students are directly taught such strategies as rehearsing, elaborating, organizing, summarizing, and self-questioning; they are also taught when each strategy can be used most productively (Stein, 1989).

## **Classroom Management Skills**

Classroom engagement has been shown to be a huge predictor of student achievement. Commandant classroom management skill -- which covers a range of practices, including delivering feedback, proximity management, expectation setting and time management -- is a strong corollary of engagement. Effective commandants, like all effective teachers manage time, space, and behavior effectively and maintain high expectations for their cadets. These classroom management skills are also taught to cadets in their second and third years of cadet enrollment.

## **Individualization/Differentiated Instruction**

Individualization is a term commonly associated with the needs of exceptional populations. In fact, many of the best practices that are applied to all student populations have their origins in research with exceptional groups. Increasingly educators are recognizing that a truly individualized education should be an objective for all students. Clearly, learning style preferences and differences apply to all segments of the school population. Flexible grouping, strategy training, instructional adaptations, differentiated curriculum, and teaching strategies all can be used in classrooms to respond to the variety of learning differences that exist in every classroom.

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### **Authentic and Frequent Assessment**

The premise of the Cadet promotion and award system is that cadet performance on specific assessments garners recognition in the form of rank advancement and individual decorations. Cadets are expected to learn content delivered through direct instruction and prove that knowledge on traditional paper and pencil tests. But cadets also “perform” at individual and unit drill events, physical fitness activities, leadership laboratory experiences, bivouacs, leadership schools, encampments, parades, color guards, promotion boards, and the Individual Major Awards program to name a few.

### **Mastery Learning**

Based on some fundamental common sense principles, mastery learning affords students the opportunity to progress at a rate and in curriculum materials that are consistent with their prior learning history. It has been shown to increase the sense of efficacy learners feel for their classroom success in addition to improving achievement. To be successful a mastery approach must be accompanied by a highly evolved and intentional curriculum to ensure that students who progress at different rates can be adequately accommodated in the classroom. The Cadet curriculum allows students to progress through ‘graded’ curricular content aligned with the rank structure. Cadets are given multiple opportunities for success.

### **Active Learning**

Active learning is a current ‘buzzword’ for drawing upon students’ prior experiences and actively engaging them in the learning process. It includes empowering students with opportunities to make explicit connections to prior knowledge, see reasons for their current learning, and be active participants in their own learning, rather than passive participants in a teach-directed process. Though the military structure of the Cadet program is traditional, efforts must be made to make learning the curricular content meaningful and student engagement high. The fact that cadets serve as peer leaders motivates all cadets to achieve higher positions of authority and responsibility. This empowers cadets with reasons to study the material and master it in preparation for assuming greater leadership roles.

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## **AVAILABLE TRAINING AIDS, THEIR ORGANIZATION, AND OTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM:**

1. **MASTER UNIT CHART:** Strands are grouped into units of six with a Master Materials Chart which helps instructional personnel visualize all available technology resources, handouts, assessments, and posters.
2. **STRAND OVERVIEW CHART:** Each strand contains a Strand Overview Chart which identifies the learning outcomes (“Big Ideas”) within each of the five CACC Objective Domains. These charts also reference the California Content Standards addressed in that strand, vocabulary which the cadets may need explicit support learning in advance of and during instruction, and strategies for special needs students.
3. **CATALOG NUMBERS:** Each instructional support component has been assigned a catalog number to aid users in storage and retrieval. Numbers have three parts; the first number is the Strand, the second is a letter corresponding to the type of instructional component (see below), and the final number represents the consecutive numbering of those components within the strand. *For instance, 3-A-5 represents the fifth assessment product within the 3<sup>rd</sup> strand.*
  - a. A = Assessments, which include informal assessments, performance tasks with rubrics, and traditional assessments
  - b. D = Digital video or sound clips
  - c. H = Handouts for cadets
  - d. M = Patriotic Music
  - e. P = Posters which can be formatted in 11X17 or 18X24 sizes and displayed in cadet rooms
  - f. T = Technology resources for teaching, primarily in the form of Power Point presentation
4. **REVISION DATES:** The latest date of revisions will be listed in the bottom left corner of all training materials to allow users to insert updated materials as they are published and refer to “latest version” lists which will be published annually.
5. **ONLINE ACCESS:** A website has been established at [www.CACCcurriculum.cadet.org](http://www.CACCcurriculum.cadet.org) with all curriculum materials. The latest updates of materials will be posted to that site monthly.
6. **FEEDBACK:** At the online CACC Curriculum Page, we have posted a feedback form to allow users to share suggestions for improving the materials in later versions. We strongly encourage all personnel to take advantage of this means of improving the curriculum for all.

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