

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION

The Board expects each student to develop the academic awareness and cognitive capabilities to be a successful learner in a complex and rapidly changing world.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby present my monitoring report on E-2 “Academic Achievement” in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of October 27th, 2015.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT’S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

I interpret Academic Achievement to mean the board expects each student to graduate with the essential foundation of academic awareness and cognitive capabilities that will support their innate human need to learn for a lifetime. This will be met by students’ achievement of the graduation requirements of the district, which will include the necessary knowledge and skills to best prepare them for their chosen learning pathway and maximize their success at their next step in learning. As the main measure of student success along the journey towards graduation, student groups are expected to be above the state averages on the Smarter Balance Assessments for English/Language Arts (SBA ELA) and the Smarter Balance Assessments for Mathematics (SBA Math) and/or other state approved measurements such as End of Course (EOC) exams for Biology and MSP Science. Success on these measures can be gauged by comparing them to the state and/or national averages and others can be measured by evidence of continued linear improvement by grade band or building. Meeting these targets is the district’s responsibility to provide the educational opportunities for students to successfully prepare themselves to meet the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world.

REPORT

There are four specific areas described in this policy. The following report will address each specific area of E-2 as best as possible. At the time of this report, I believe that the district is in compliance with the Board’s expectations on two of the four expectations.

1. ***Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings (reading and writing).*** **NOT FULLY IN COMPLIANCE**

The following information is a breakdown of the state SBA ELA scores for the grades tested (La Center School District compared to State Average). It is important to know that this is the first year our students took this new state test, which was administered via computer to all of our secondary students. Given this was the first time so many students took online testing we were very pleased with how things went.

Our students scored at or above the state average in five of the seven grades tested. The specific scores for our students compared to state averages were 47.0% to 52.1% in 3rd grade, 64.6% to 54.6% in 4th grade, 48.4% to 57.6% in 5th grade, 58.7% to 54.0% in 6th grade, 69.8% to 56.9% in 7th grade, and 72.6% to 56.9% in 8th grade. For 11th grade, students in our district averaged a 31.2% passage rate for reading compared to an average of 26.3% for other 11th graders across the state.

It is important to note two very essential facts about these tests. First is we were required to give this new high school assessment (11th grade SBA ELA) even though most had already passed (89.7% passed reading and 90% passed writing) the previous state assessment known as the HSPE in the 10th grade. Even though most did not need the SBA ELA to graduate, they still beat the state average. In the infinite wisdom of the state, they thought this was a good use of their time and we had no option but to make our Juniors take the test anyway.

The second important fact to keep in mind with the above test scores is our students in grades 3, 4 and 5 used a very cumbersome paper and pencil test that was extremely convoluted and riddled with new processes and a number of missteps in the materials provided to us by the state. If it weren't for the quick thinking by our staff, our scores would have been even worse. Beyond the elementary grades, all of our students took the online version of the SBA ELA and as you can see they exceeded the state average with most by considerable margins.

Finally, it is important to keep all this in a systemic context by knowing that for the graduating class of 2015, 100% of our students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing all state requirements in both reading and the writing.

2. *Effectively integrate the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics, history, geography; arts, health and fitness so as to support their specific learning pathway.* NOT FULLY IN COMPLIANCE

The district has access to state Smarter Balance Assessments in Math (SBA Math) as well as MSP (Measure of Student Progress) and EOC (End of Course Exam) science testing data in only two of the above academic areas (science and math). The following is a breakdown of these scores for the grades tested in a “La Center School District” compared to “State” Average format. For math we were above the state average in three of the seven grades tested. In science, our students scored above the state average in one of the three grades tested.

For the mathematics portion of the state tests students took the SBA Math in 3rd through 8th as well as 11th grades. The specific scores for our students compared to state averages were 54.4% to 56.7% in 3rd grade, 62.8% to 54.0% in 4th grade, 34.9% to 48.1% in 5th grade, 45.2% to 45.5% in 6th grade, 54.3% to 48.0% in 7th grade, 44.2% to 46.1% in 8th grade and 13.9% to 13.7% in 11th grade.

For the state science tests (MSP or EOC), the specific scores of our 5th grade, 51.5% of our students passed compared to the state average of 63.4%. In 8th grade, our students passed at a 64.6% rate compared to the state average of 60.7%. Finally, our 10th graders passed their Biology EOC at a rate of 71.5% compared to the 72.5% passage rate average across the state.

An important note is that the SBA Math was a brand new test for our students this year. Additionally, for the first time all secondary students taking this test did so on the computer instead of with paper and pencil. Also, just as with the SBA ELA we were forced to give the 11th grade SBA Math test even though most had already passed the math EOC test required for graduation in previously to the Junior year.

Finally, it is important to keep all this in a systemic context by knowing that for the graduating class of 2015, 100% of our students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing all state requirements in mathematics.

3. *Think analytically, logically and creatively, and integrate experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems (critical thinking).*
IN COMPLIANCE

As you know, this has been core to our work as a district for many years. It serves as the foundation of our practice as educators as well as our focus for creating the learning environments for students to grow in. The district's learning model has at its foundation the goal of helping students become life-long learners through becoming confident, self-directed learners. This requires students to think independently in a rapidly changing world.

A big part of our work of the past few years has been in raising the cognitive demand of every learning experience provided students as well as staff. Whether it is going beyond the classroom and incorporating critical thinking in extra-curricular activities to grounding the teacher/principal evaluation process in higher cognitive reflection activities, we are working diligently to incorporate critical thinking into everything we do as a learning organization.

4. *Connect the importance of work and how performance, effort, habits and decisions regarding school directly affect future learning opportunities within their specific career and educational pathway (work awareness and planning).*
IN COMPLIANCE

Having served in the district for more than a decade, I have seen a consistent and deliberate effort by staff to create powerful learning experiences for our students. I see this regularly during my learning walks around the district where I observe students working hard to both expand their knowledge and at the same time very focused on improving their skills as a learner. This consistent effort to get better

every day as a learner is what excites me the most about the future success potential of our students. They are not simply working to achieve success in passing their classes, but more and more I observe students who are genuinely seeing how their efforts today will lead to greater learning success in their future.

One of my greatest regular experiences of observing this is with my Senior group of students within my Navigation advisory group I am part of (hard to believe they have put up with me for more than three years now). Having worked with my team of students as they work to prepare for their future learning opportunities, I have had the opportunity to observe their steady growth in both their thinking and an expanding maturity relative to their choices they are making as learners. Each lesson we go through I see them pushing themselves in their thinking, which helps them shape to a greater detail the vision they have for their future as learners.

I believe whole-heartedly what I am seeing in our students is explicitly connected back to the district's learning model and the environments our teachers create for students to learn within every day. In short, I have more and more confidence that the culture of learning throughout our district supports students' efforts to become a more confident and more self-reliant lifelong learner as articulated in the Board's Ends policies. Therefore, I am very confident I am in compliance with the expectations of this policy.