Monitoring Report - Ends Policy
E-2, Academic Achievement

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 November 23rd, 2010.

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 needed 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 Measure of Student Progress (MSP) and the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) and/or other state approved measurements for each grade level tested. In addition, other measures are used including but not limited to, overall on-time gradation rates, 8th grade promotion rates, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy) scores, SME testing progress, SAT and ACT test averages, EOC (end of course) exams, which will become required this year in math, along with state required CBAs (classroom based assessments) in social studies, health and fine arts, and AP participation and test success. Success on some of these measures can be gauged by comparing them to the state and 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 three of the four expectations.

1. ***Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings (reading, writing, and communications).*** **IN COMPLIANCE**

   The following information is a breakdown of the state MSP/HSPE scores for the

grades tested (La Center School District compared to State Average).

For the reading portion of the MSP/HSPE, the district is above the state average in all grades. The specific scores for each grade are as follows: 3rd grade (73.2% to 72.1%), 4th grade (75.5% to 67.2%), 5th grade (72.9% to 69.6%), 6th grade (67.5% to 64.6%), 7th grade (68.5% to 63.4%), 8th grade (85.7% to 69.4%) and 10th grade (84.4% to 78.9%).

For the writing portion of the MSP/HSPE, the district is above the state average in all grades. The specific scores for each grade are as follows: 4th grade (66.2% to 61.1%), 7th grade (76.4% to 70.3%) and 10th grade (91.7% to 86.0%).

For the graduating class of 2010, 100% of the students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing the writing portion of the MSP/HSPE or pass an alternative assessment. All but one student was able to ultimately achieve success in passing the reading portion of the MSP/HSPE or pass an alternative assessment. That student is continuing to work to meet this requirement.

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 IN COMPLIANCE**

The district has access to state MSP/HSPE testing data in only two of the above academic areas. The following is a breakdown of these scores for the grades tested in a (La Center School District compared to State Average) format. We were above the state average in three of the seven grades tested. Scores in grades 3-5 were perplexing in part, but predictable in other ways. Staff are not only implementing new math curriculum as well as restructuring the ways they create learning environments. We fully anticipate more consistent scores next year in this grade band as a result of gaining momentum this past year. Results in the middle school scores continue to show growth as they are leading the way in creating high cognitive demand learning environments. This is evident in how students start to improve math scores in 6th grade and get stronger each year through middle school. The 10th grade drop was the first in many years and was somewhat predictable based on our first year implementation of our new curriculum. We will also be changing to EOC (end of course) assessments this year in high school math, which will give us another "opportunity" to review curriculum and state standards. Our high school math department has already begun this work and will assist us in our conversations about our students, the curriculum and the state assessments.

For the mathematics portion of the MSP/HSPE, the district is above the state average in 4th grade (61.9% to 53.7%), 7th grade (64.6% to 55.3%) and 8th grade (60.5% to 51.6%). The district is below the state average in 3rd grade (52.0% to 61.8%), 5th grade (31.8% to 53.6%), 6th grade (48.4% to 51.9%) and 10th grade

(37.9% to 41.7%).
For the science portion of the MSP/HSPE, the district is above the state average in 8th grade (65.5% to 51.1%). The district is below the state average in 5th grade (26.4% to 34.0%) and 10th grade (44.2% to 44.8%).

It is important to note that we have spent significant energy to increase the cognitive demand in our science classrooms as well as across the district as well as tighten up our scope and sequence particularly at the high school level with the help of Amy Neiman (one of our high school science teachers). Although the 10th grade HSPE is a fraction below the state average, it represents the highest percentage in the last 6 years and the fourth straight year of improvement.

For the graduating class of 2010, 100% of all students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing the math portion of the MSP/HSPE, pass an alternative assessment or demonstrate successful continued enrollment in math courses through their senior year to meet state graduation requirements.

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

As you are aware from my monthly board reports, our staff continues to work hard at creating high cognitive demand – student centered learning environments. Other evidence you can reflect upon as verification of the energy spent on meeting this expectation would be the classroom visits you have made as board members to see for yourself the types of learning environments that are being created to foster students' critical thinking skills. One particular example lesson was observed by at least two board members during a learning walk where 6th grade math students were studying property maps and comparing one section of land to another. Their work was to determine fractional ownership of land sections if property owners combined land and how that compared to other fractional ownership in other land sections. Instead of simply doing fractions as equations, students had real life situations to see how the math could be used to create meaning. This type of example is rapidly becoming the norm in classrooms rather than the exception as part of our staff creating more and more cognitively demanding learning environments. This example of what we refer to as a quadrant 1 classroom is increasing in frequency across the district as a direct result of professional development that encourages everyone in the district to be a life long learner and to take a scientific approach to their profession. This year we have 47 teachers and all administrators participating in lab classroom projects (LCP) and 15 teachers who took advantage of the first round of learning condition mini-grants (LCMG) opportunities to work together to improve the learning conditions in their rooms.

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

We continue to engage in work designed to assist students' connections between their course work and the future trajectory they are on relative to their post-secondary learning choices. The district is in its second year of using the Pathways to the Future model to help students prepare for their next step in learning relative to their trajectory. In other words, students are rapidly becoming aware that their high school diploma is not an end, but rather the first step in a beginning.

One example of how the pathway model is being woven into the way we do business, counselors are communicating with students and parents graduation progress relative to their chosen pathway. Another example is how staff is lining up their course options relative to the pathways so as to more clearly help students see the sequence necessary to maximize post-secondary success. Finally, brochures are being created to specifically show students career fields they can prepare for within the pathways that can help students better connect what they are currently taking in school to where they want to go after graduation. This last one is just beginning to develop, beginning in the CTE departments and then expanding to pathways that are met primarily through our core curricular areas. I see how this could be expanded even further to cover many broad areas of interests such as engineering, health, government, business, education, arts/music, etc. The framework is the key to opening up this discussion and it appears to be gaining momentum as we are beginning our second year of using it.