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 24th, 2009.

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. As a measure of student success along the journey towards graduation, student groups are expected to be above the state averages on the WASL and/or other state approved measurements for each grade level tested. 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. It is also important to know that the Board changed two of the following four expectations (#2 and #4) as well as the overarching E-2 expectation on October 27th, 2009. Because this change was less than a month ago, the evidence needed to fully support these expectations will need to be enhanced for next year.

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 WASL scores for the grades tested (La Center School District compared to State Average).

   For the reading portion of the WASL, the district is above the state average in all grades. The specific scores for each grade are as follows: 3rd grade (77.1% to 71.4%), 4th grade (74.2% to 73.6%), 5th grade (84.3% to 74.0%), 6th grade (73.8% to 72.0%), 7th grade (70.1% to 59.3%), 8th grade (81% to 67.5%) and 10th grade

(85.8% to 81.2%). Last year we were below the state average for reading in 8th grade (61.2% to 65.9%) and 10th grade (79.2% to 81.3%), so as you can see they have made solid improvement.

For the writing portion of the WASL, the district is above the state average in all grades. The specific scores for each grade are as follows: 4th grade (63.3% to 60.4%), 7th grade (74.4% to 69.8%) and 10th grade (90.8% to 86.7%). Last year we were slightly below the state average for writing in 7th grade (69.6% to 70.0%) and 10th grade (86.1% to 86.2%).

For the graduating class of 2009, 100% of the students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing both the reading and writing portion of the WASL or pass an alternative assessment.

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 FULL COMPLIANCE**

As stated previously, this expectation of this policy has been recently changed to include linking student work to support their specific learning pathway. Since this is new and the student's learning pathway model is also new, I don't have specific evidence of this integration to cite at this time. In the future, evidence will be collected relative to these changes in grades 6 through 12 where the pathway model begins to take shape. For now, I have included evidence that has been used to document progress previously.

The district has access to state WASL 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.

For the mathematics portion of the WASL, the district is above the state average in 3rd grade (74.0% to 66.3%), 7th grade (56.4% to 51.8%), 8th grade (52.9% to 50.8%) and 10th grade (50.9% to 45.4%). The district is below the state average in 4th grade (39.8% to 52.3%), 5th grade (54.3% to 61.9%) and 6th grade (49.2% to 50.9%). Last year, the district had only 1 of 7 grades tested above the state average. This year we have 4 of 7 above. Of the three that are not testing above the state average, two continue to struggle (4th and 5th), while 6th made progress (49.2% this year compared to 42.6% last year). We continue to work in this area and believe new curriculum, instructional focus and math support changes will show improvement in all three of these grade levels for next year.

For the science portion of the WASL, the district is only above the state average in 8th grade (68.6% to 51.1%). The district is below the state average in 5th grade (30.7% to 44.9%) and 10th grade (35.0% to 38.8%). Last year we also had only 1 of 3 grades tested pass the science assessment (5th grade). To address this matter

we have initiated a full science program review across the district and engaged different staff in this process. The state has also issued new science standards, which we have begun to review and integrate into our instruction. ESD 112 and more specifically the Science & Math Education Resource Center (SMERC) has begun a review of its efforts to support struggling districts. The piece that I am most interested in is our science kits that we use through out grades K-8. I have also taken on the role of the science instructional support administrator and am learning a lot about our science program. I will say with full confidence that I believe we have staff who are dedicated to creating the highest quality science learning environments for our students. I have also seen direct evidence of their willingness and desire to change to meet this challenge. I believe it simply is a matter of focusing our energy, curriculum and expertise to provide students with what they need to be successful science students.

For the graduating class of 2009, 100% of the students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing the math portion of the WASL, pass an alternative assessment or demonstrate successful continued enrollment in math courses through their senior year to meet state requirements.

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

As I have communicated to the board in my monthly superintendent reports, we have been working extremely hard at reframing our work as teachers and administrators around the concepts of learning and learning at a high cognitive level. This focus has begun to translate into the classroom in how lessons are created for and in many cases by students. Examples of this can be broad such as our work as learners with the various book studies on assessment or through our work within the five Lab Classroom Project (LCP) teams or professional learning community teams throughout the district. Well over half of our certificated staff are involved in specific learning opportunities (e.g. book studies and LCP) to bring high cognitive demand lessons, activities and assessments into the classroom. Beyond this, there are many other staff who are making significant efforts to change their practice with the support of building principals.

In my learning walks in classrooms, I continue to see evidence of the transition from the traditional "content delivery" classroom where the teacher is the expert who provides the content through lecture towards more of a learning facilitator role where they create opportunities or classroom learning topographies for student to really have the opportunities to analyze, evaluate and create meaning using the content. The goal is to help our students learn how to learn anything in more meaningful and efficient ways rather than simply being "biological file cabinets" to be filled up with knowledge. Put another way, content is part of the "means" instead of the "ends".

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. I believe one of the most important accomplishments with this work over the past year are the board's new graduation requirements that includes the multiple pathway model (i.e. Technical, Academic and Honors pathways).

This framework for linking coursework to a student's preparation for their next step in learning is a further continuation of the concepts behind our Navigation 101 program, which also continues to evolve over time. Through student and staff input, Navigation has begun a process that I believe will build itself around the learning pathways students select. One of the most powerful parts of the Navigation program continues to be student led conferences. These too are and will continue to evolve over time, especially as our future vision for technology becomes a reality.

Without question, we have lots to learn about how to fully tap the potential of these efforts, but I am pleased with the progress and the energy to meet this expectation. Therefore, I believe that even though we have a ways to go I can say with confidence at this juncture we are in compliance with the intent of this expectation.