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 26th, 2013.

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 such as End of Course (EOC) exams for each grade level tested. In addition, other measures are used including but not limited to, overall on-time graduation rates, 8th grade promotion rates, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy) scores, SME testing progress, SAT and ACT test averages, 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/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 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, our students scored above the state average in six of the seven grades tested. The specific scores for our students compared to state averages were 75.6% to 73.1% in 3rd grade, 76.7% to 72.5% in 4th grade, 69.6% to 72.7% in 5th grade, 71.7% to 71.5% in 6th grade, 76.9% to 68.8% in 7th grade, and 72.8% to 66.4% in 8th grade. For 10th grade, students in our district averaged a 91.7% passage rate for reading compared to an average of 83.6% for other 10th graders across the state.

For the writing portion of the MSP/HSPE, our students scored above the state averages at all grade levels tested. The specific scores for each grade (district average compared to state average) were 65.5% to 62.2% in 4th grade, 75.5% to 71.1% in 7th grade and 95.8% to 85.0% in 10th grade.

It is important to note that for the graduating class of 2013, 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 IN COMPLIANCE**

The district has access to state MSP/HSPE/EOC 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 four of the eight grades tested. In science, our students scored above the state average at all levels.

For the mathematics portion of the state tests students took the MSP (Measures of Student Progress) in grades 3rd through 8th and EOC (End of Course exam) for high school students. The specific scores for our students compared to state averages were 61.0% to 65.3% in 3rd grade, 54.3% to 62.5% in 4th grade, 48.2% to 62.7% in 5th grade, 53.6% to 59.4% in 6th grade, 67.8% to 63.8% in 7th grade, and 54.4% to 53.3% in 8th grade.

The EOC exams in mathematics at the high school level showed that our students were above the state average in both assessments again this year. The specific scores for EOC Year 1 were 57.8% for our students compared to 53.1% as the state average, while the EOC Year 2 were 82.1% for our students compared to 76.5% across the state.

The science state tests (MSP or EOC), the specific scores of our 5th grade, 72.3% of our students passed compared to the state average of 66.6%. In 8th grade, our students passed at a 69.6% rate compared to the state average of 64.9%. Finally, our 10th graders passed their Biology EOC at a rate of 71.6% compared to the 68.6% passage rate average across the state.

Finally, even though we continue to work hard to exceed the state average in mathematics at the elementary school grade levels, in the secondary grades our students pass the state average and finish strong in high school. This was once again verified by 100% of the graduating class of 2013 were able to ultimately achieve success in passing the state's math requirements.

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

Our work with redesigning our learning environments across the district to be thought "full" is really hitting its stride. Staff work to design lessons from the ground up with a focus on critical thinking has jumped to a whole new level this year with our district-wide work in Making Thinking Visible. Their October 11th staff inservice was entirely focused on raising the cognitive demand of the learning even more not only for all of our students, but for them as well.

This logical deepening of our system-wide usage of the La Center Learning Model has served to align almost every one of our teachers with the tools necessary to systemically implement this vision across the district. I have been very pleased with how staff work and their conversations around the way they design their lessons has pushed the cognitive demand of our classrooms even further as a result of this recent work.

I recently had an opportunity to have an administrator from another district complete a learning walk with me in the middle school. In every classroom we visited, students were engaged and energized by their learning work. In particular, two students in a Language Arts class in the middle school were discussing the important points they found in different news articles on tuberculosis. Their work is very emblematic of what is happening across the district.

The goal of the lesson these students were involved in was to compare and contrast their respective articles and use the information to write a position paper on the disease. When I asked what the next step beyond the position paper was, they both quickly explained they were preparing for an upcoming unit in poetry by Edgar Allen Poe because the author had several close family members die of tuberculosis. They wanted to learn more about the disease so as to better understand Poe's world and therefore his poetry.

Even though this is one example, I observe this type of work and thinking more and more regularly during my classroom visits. I often stop and reflect upon these observations and ponder if I would have had the capability to do similar thinking with I was the same age. My answer often is that I will never know because the learning environments I was part of as a youth never challenged my

thinking to the same level. So in the end of my reflection following my learning walks, I quite often determine that I was both intensely impressed by the work our students are doing each and every day and at the same time a bit envious as well.

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

As I stated in #3 above, in my learning walks around the district I regularly see our 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 sophomore group of students within my Navigation advisory group I am part of. I observe these students on a regular basis and see 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.