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 27th, 2012.

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, the district is above the state average in 4th, 8th and 10th grades. In 3rd grade we were substantially below, while in 5th, 6th and 7th grades we were slightly below. The specific scores for our students compared to state averages were 61.1% to 68.8% in 3rd grade, 88.0% to 71.5% in 4th grade, 67.6% to 71.1% in 5th grade, 69.4% to 70.7% in 6th grade, 69.6% to 71.3% in 7th grade, and 81.7% to 67.3% in 8th grade. For 10th grade, students in our district averaged a 91.7% passage rate for reading compared to an average of 81.3% for other 10th graders across the state.

For the writing portion of the MSP/HSPE, the scores for our students were above the state averages in 4th and 10th grades, yet slightly below in 7th grade. The specific scores for each grade were 67.2% to 61.4% in 4th grade, 69.7% to 71.0% in 7th grade and 91.7% to 85.4% in 10th grade.

It is important to note that for the graduating class of 2012, 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 two of the seven grades tested. In science, while all scores improved from last year, our students were slightly below the state average in 5th grade, while going above in 8th and 10th grades.

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 43.5% to 65.4% in 3rd grade, 58.1% to 59.4% in 4th grade, 48.9% to 63.8% in 5th grade, 62.7% to 61.5% in 6th grade, 51.2% to 59.2% in 7th grade, and 50.0% to 55.5% in 8th grade.

With all that said, we looked at cohort growth year over year and found some interesting results. In 4th grade compared to last year's 3rd grade scores, there was a 4.8% improvement. In 6th grade compared to last year's 5th grade there was 4.4% improvement. In 7th grade compared to last year's 6th grade there was a 2.0% improvement. This shows even though our K-8 math scores were puzzling and disappointing, there were signs of growth year over year in three of the five K-8 groups where cohort data could be examined.

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 73.9% for our students compared to 64.3% as the state average, while the EOC Year 2 were 84.7% for our students compared to 73.5% across the state.

As for the science portion of the MSP/EOC, the specific scores were 5th grade had a 64.0% passage rate compared to the state average of 66.3%, while 8th grade had a 77.8% rate compared to 66.4%. Finally, our 10th graders passed the Biology EOC at a rate of 74.7% compared to 64.3% for the average science student across the state.

Finally, even though we continue to struggle with mathematics in the elementary and middle school grade levels, when it counts for graduation our students do very well. This is shown by the graduating class of 2012 100% of all students were able to ultimately achieve success in passing the math requirements for graduation even though in 3rd through 8th grade they never were able to exceed 50% passing rate on the state math tests.

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

With the formal adoption this year of the "La Center Learner Competencies" we have put the capstone policy within our work to fully implement the "La Center Learning Model" that has been developed over the past five or six years. While competencies continue to evolve and more fully develop, the La Center Learning Model has always focused student learning environments on increasing cognitive demand, improving the flow of information and inspiring trust around our ability to learn from our students. This sets the framework for all learners throughout the district. The Learner Competencies focus both staff and students on the goal of obtaining personal skills and abilities that provide them with a foundation to be a lifelong learner.

Our work district wide can be observed in classroom after classroom where students are analyzing, evaluating and creating on a consistent and routine basis. They are working cooperatively and sharing both ideas and challenges within what is more accurately described now as Learning Laboratories rather than rooms where Knowledge Transfer takes place. When I visit classrooms and talk with students, I usually ask them what they are working on. The most common answer that I receive now starts with "We are trying to figure out…" followed by a pretty thorough explanation of their learning work/journey. Teachers are now usually seen as "guides on the side" to help their students learn rather than simply the holders of knowledge. All of these changes in the learning environments are coupled with better instructional materials that we review and adopt. We now look at curriculum in a much different way, looking for presentation of ideas and

challenges, not presentation of knowledge as the prominent attribute.

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

Due to staff transitions and a retirement over the last two years, we have had a complete makeover in the high school career and counseling center, now known as the Student Services Center. More than just a name change, I have seen some significant changes in both the academic and career counseling protocols. Our "Pathways to the Future" framework continues to be our central model for student visualization and planning of their educational pathway. However, the new team has developed new tools for supporting students and brought a new level of energy to implementing the Pathways in very exciting ways.

The Board had a chance to see this new energy and the level of data analysis first hand when our high school counselors (Kristen Krem and Tim DiStefano) made a presentation earlier this fall regarding how they track student progress toward graduation. Beyond the Pathways framework, there has been a significant refocusing on aligning all the activities emanating from the SSC (Student Services Center) to help students take greater ownership of the educational plan. This is done through working to bring in more representatives from a variety of four-year local and regional colleges, universities, training centers, and military branches based on student interest and need. In addition they are expanding organized trips to local institutions that are options for our graduates.