Monitoring Report - Executive Limitations Policy
EL-13, Academic Standards and Practices

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION

The Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that the district adopts a standards-based system of instruction with a rigorous and viable curriculum for specific courses of study intended to achieve the Board's Ends policies.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitations Policy EL-13 "Academic Standards and Practices" 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 the board's expectation regarding academic standards and practices to mean the district must implement a coordinated and connected K-12 scope and sequence of curriculum that is both rigorous and appropriate to prepare students for their future pathways in life. The curriculum and instructional strategies used by staff must also be research based and designed to meet content standards as defined either at the local level, state level and/or federal level. I further interpret this policy to mean the board expects timely and effective communication with parents about their student's progress as well as stakeholder involvement in the process of developing new and/or significantly changing existing district academic programs and standards.

REPORT

There are eight specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each of the areas of EL-13 as best as possible. At the time of this report, I believe the district is in compliance with all these board expectations.

1. ***The superintendent shall not fail to implement rigorous academic content standards that reflect research based "best practices" along with the district's Learner Competencies.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
   Our district staff continues to work hard towards creating high quality learning environments that are built upon rigorous academic content standards provided to us by the state. We are consistently reviewing best practices and researching curriculum to find what best meets the needs of our students. With the recent state adoption of Core Standards in Reading and Mathematics, we have begun the work of re-evaluating our current adoptions for alignment with these new standards. We are continuing to operate on a 7-year adoption cycle for each of our academic areas. The actual adoption process takes four years to work through so on any given year we have four different processes going at one time in multiple areas. The first year

is aimed at researching best practices and curriculum, the second year is to review materials available while the third is to implement and provide the initial staff development around the adopted materials. The fourth year in the process involves the review of the implementation chosen and to make a determination if adjustments or augmentations with the instructional materials need to occur. This year we will be reviewing our Fine Arts curriculum as the cycle calls for in the first year. Even though it is not part of the cycle, we will be reviewing our current mathematics adoption as an extra review of this important academic area.

2. ***The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that the district works with staff, parents, students, appropriate elements of the community, and others to review and revise both content standards and the Learner Competencies.***
IN COMPLIANCE
The district follows a seven-year rotation adoption schedule (available online). The adoption process includes the research and review of up-to-date research based materials that meet state and national standards in order to maximize the potential for student success. In addition, materials go through a rigorous review and evaluation process to identify materials with a maximum level of alignment of standards, assessment and instructional strategies, as well as district philosophical stance on the type of learning environments we seek to create. When appropriate, materials are piloted prior to adoption to identify potential staff development needs and necessary support for successful implementation.

As part of the adoption process, parents, students and engaged community members, along side of staff work on learning what content and learning opportunities might be best for students. Last year's literacy review was a perfect example of having a broad spectrum of stakeholders review, converse and ultimately agree on an adoption. (The decision was to maintain our previous adoption)

3. ***The superintendent shall not fail to implement a rigorous and viable curriculum and create learning environments to meet Federal, State, and the District's adopted content and the Learner Competency standards so as to provide students with the educational experiences needed to develop into confident and self-reliant life-long learners.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
The district focus is to provide staff with the necessary information and resources to implement a rigorous and viable curriculum and program of instruction aligned with national, state and district adopted content standards. The primary concern for all new courses and the adoption of materials is to support the successful implementation of courses that align with standards of the state and with federal law in a way that supports student success.

Our staff has and continues to connect their work to state standards. An example of this is within math where the state eliminated the high school HSPE (formerly the WASL) and replaced it with end of course (EOC) exams for both Math A and B or Algebra I and Algebra II two years ago. Staff reviewed these standards and

developed and implemented a plan to weave them into their instruction. As a result, our students have out paced the state averages by a significant amount over the last two years on both the EOC 1 and 2 tests.

Beyond the standards, as stated previously, our staff continue working hard to rethink how they create learning environments that help students use the content to learn how to learn anything rather than simply knowing the content itself. Our learning to learn model and their work within a wide variety of professional learning communities are focused on rethinking their practice in order to create 21st century learning environments for all students. Over the last two years we have had 77 different teachers take a total of 258 classes for an average of 3.39 classes per teacher. The majority of these classes have focused on either technology improvements in the classroom or creating learning environments that promote the acquisition of learner competencies.

4. ***The superintendent shall not fail to adequately measure each student's progress toward achieving the content standards and the Learner Competencies.***
IN COMPLIANCE
The district uses annual state assessments as a primary indicator of student progress in grades 3-10 (students assessed in the spring of the previous year). In addition, classroom based assessments aligned with state grade level expectations (GLEs) are used to monitor student progress throughout the year. The district Teaching and Learning department provides building support to assess student achievement in reading using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy) assessments three times each year in grades K-6. In grades 7-12, students are assessed for reading (other than the MSP/HSPE) on an as needed basis. Tools such as SuccessMaker have been added to provide us important information on student progress in 3-6 math. Additionally we may use other measures to inform student progress such as SAT or ACT scores, AP participation and scores, and 8th grade promotions policy success rates to name a few.

5. ***The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that parents are kept informed of student progress toward achieving content standards and Learner Competencies, but also how such progress is measured.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
Parents are informed of student progress through progress reports, report cards, parent conferences, and individual contacts. Student Learning Plans (SLPs) are developed for struggling students to outline ways to adjust instruction and enlist parental support to ensure student success toward academic standards is achieved.

Staff also uses their individual teacher web pages, on-line teacher plan books and Skyward as additional tools to keep parents well informed on student progress. Additionally, parents receive MSP, HSPE and EOC scores showing their student's results. Again, in the elementary, SuccessMaker for math has also been added to help show student progress data.

6. ***The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that all LCSD secondary students have an education plan for their high school experience.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
We continue to implement, explore and redesign as necessary Navigation 101. A key piece of this work is built around student-led conferences, which continue to be successful for all involved. Ms. Krem has continued the work with advisory groups at the middle school so that all students beginning in the sixth grade will identify a pathway. With the technical, academic and honors pathways now more specifically articulated in the graduation requirements, and being introduced in the sixth grade, I believe students via their work in Navigation 101 and advisory, will have a more solid foundation on which to base their course selection. Without question, there will be lots more to learn in this work yet at this juncture based on what we know now I believe we are meeting the intent of this expectation. In order to further this learning work, I have taken on my own personal learning opportunity by leading a Navigation team of Freshman for myself this school year. I did this so that I could see first hand and learn directly from students what are the challenges and opportunities the Navigation curriculum can provide.

7. ***The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that all LCSD secondary students have an education plan for the year following graduation.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
As stated in number 6 above, Navigation 101 requires the development of a post-secondary plan for each student. This plan is developed currently in 6th grade and is used as a tool in the selection of courses and to focus student's work on their pathway to their next learning opportunity.

8. ***The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that all LCSD students demonstrate through a culminating project the comprehensive application of their academic work and the Core Competencies inherent in the Board's Ends policies.***
IN COMPLIANCE
All high school students are supported in the creation of their own comprehensive portfolio throughout their high school years. Part of this process is the creation of a fifth-year plan delineating their post-secondary pathway choices. As part of Navigation 101, students present their plans and portfolio's to parents, family and faculty advisors. For seniors, this serves as their culminating project. This program is now entering into its seventh year. We continue to gather survey data from teachers, parents and students around this process and make appropriate changes and improvements. With the rollout of the iPads throughout the high school as well as my own personal learning experience with Navigation, I believe we should begin to see a greater use of current technology within the Student Led Conference experience.