

MINNETONKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY# 618: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish understanding and communications to connect student assessment, testing, curriculum and instruction.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Minnetonka School District believes that student assessment is vital to student learning and growth.

- A. Assessments should be aligned with the standards and provide information for selection of instructional materials and curriculum development.
- B. Assessments should be differentiated in response to the audience they serve and provide a profile which is meaningful to the student, parent, teacher, counselor, administrator and community.
- C. Assessments should be multidimensional and yield data, when appropriate, on typical ways of thinking, feeling, acting and metacognition used in learning as well as ability and achievement measures. A variety of assessment tools should be used to evaluate learning including common assessment, performance assessment, assessments using technology and other forms of traditional assessments.
- D. Longitudinal, aggregated assessments are useful for analyzing and reporting data. Norm referenced data provides information on student achievement relative to other groups in the District, state and nation.
- E. Assessments provide benchmarks on student learning. Assessments should reflect student growth and be used for diagnosis and direction for future learning.
- F. Assessments should effectively and efficiently provide data necessary to comply with policies, grants, laws and funding.

III. DEFINITIONS

Curriculum: a written plan including standards, benchmarks, essential questions, an assessment plan, instructional resources and strategies, and time allocations for emphasis and pacing for the content to be taught.

Instruction: A teacher-led process, which transforms well-planned curriculum into student learning. Instruction is standards-focused teaching for the purpose of providing meaningful

learning experiences that enable all students to master academic content and achieve personal goals.

Assessments: Multiple tools used to gather information about the student's performance on the standards taught.

Evaluation: The process of making judgments about the level of student's understanding or performance.

Standard: A statement of what the student will be able to know, understand and do.

Benchmark: A clear, specific description of knowledge or skills the student should acquire by a particular point in the student's schooling.

Differentiation: The process teachers use to plan learning experiences, which intentionally respond to learner differences. Students would have opportunities to work at their levels of readiness (assessed levels of skills and knowledge), in preferred and varied learning modes/styles, and engage their interests in order to achieve curricular goals.

Metacognition: A mental process of thinking about how one learns. This is a strategy that can be taught and modeled to students to help them learn rigorous, difficult content.

IV. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The School Board, in its governance capacity, is accountable for the teaching and learning program and delegates responsibilities as follows:

The Superintendent, through designees, shall establish criteria by which student performance, on academic content standards and other locally developed assessments, is to be evaluated.

Staff members will be expected to utilize curriculum and staff development opportunities to the extent necessary to ensure effective implementation of the Board-adopted academic content standards and locally developed assessments.

V. CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM GOALS

The Minnetonka School District shall conduct a continuous assessment program including ability, achievement and performance on classroom assessments to serve the following purposes:

- A. Assist students in making decisions about courses of study, future education, and/or career planning;
- B. Assist faculty and administration in making instructional decisions related to:
 1. Identification and development of special courses and programs;
 2. Analysis of curricula components and student performance;
 3. Identification of student strengths and weaknesses;
 4. Selection of students for inclusion into programs or classes;
 5. Study District student performance as compared to local and national measures.

- C. Inform parents and the community about aspects of student performance as related to national and local norms;
- D. Satisfy the legal requirements for Special Education.
 1. Students referred for an assessment to determine special education needs will be assessed by a multidisciplinary team according to an assessment plan developed as part of the referral process, only after parent/guardian permission is received. The team will conduct a comprehensive assessment in those areas of suspected disability, using instruments and procedures, in the person's primary language if possible, and in accordance with recognized professional standards. Assessment will include a review of the student's performance, based on the specific instructional strategies used in the classroom, performance in other daily routine environments, and information reported by parents, teachers and others regularly involved with the student.
 2. Assessment summaries shall include the reason for referral, instruments and procedures used, results and interpretation of the assessment, a review of the person's functioning in their current environment, the current level of performance, and the team's judgments and recommendations.
 3. Re-assessment must be conducted at least every three years, unless the I.E. P. team agrees it is not needed. ~~ø~~ An assessment may be conducted sooner if the student or agency requests, and must be conducted if the parent requests.
- E. Satisfy state and local graduation requirements.

VI. STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

- A. The District will take all necessary steps to ensure that the standardized assessment for group achievement and ability assessments is in accordance with guidelines and procedures established for each test by its publisher and the District.
- B. Parents and students, eighteen years or older, shall be made aware of the purpose and intended use of assessment results, their right to refuse participation in standardized assessment, any consequences arising from participating or refusing to participate in assessment, and information regarding other persons or agencies authorized to receive assessment results.
- C. The District has the obligation to see that understandable and usable information about assessment results is communicated to faculty, administration, parents, students and community on a timely basis. Routinely, parents will be given their children's achievement and aptitude assessment results, with appropriate interpretation by faculty and administration. Assessment results and interpretation will be shared with individual students, upon request.

1. Results of the standardized assessment program will be presented and interpreted to the School Board as an information item. A complete report of results of the testing program will be presented to the School Board on an annual basis.
 - a. The report shall include multiple year data for the District, delivered by grade level assessments.
 - b. An interpretation of test results shall accompany this report. Interpretation of assessment results shall include the purposes for which the specific test was designed, what the test purports to measure, the degree of reliability and validity that can be expected, any weaknesses in the instrument or problems associated with its administration as well as any other factors which might affect the usefulness of results.
 2. Assessment results will be provided to individual schools in the District.
 3. In the interpretation of results, it shall be recognized that standardized and performance assessments are approximate indicators of student achievement or ability. They are snapshots in time of a student's ability or progress, used in conjunction with other measures.
- D. Assessment results will be maintained and released in accordance with provisions of state and federal law, as well as District policy, as delineated in Policy-515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.
- E. A routine cycle of review for the District's Testing Program shall include appraisal instruments used, following two years' use, and a total program and policy review, on a five-year basis.

VII. ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

The District shall establish an environment conducive to the design and use of multiple assessment tools to report student progress in addition to the standardized assessment program.

- A. Research indicates the importance of multiple assessment tools which are meaningful and directly aligned to standards, benchmarks, and curriculum. The tools should have criteria against which the student, groups, teachers or others may measure performance. Differentiation, by design, requires pre-assessment and multiple, ongoing forms of assessment and evaluation.
- B. As a part of the Curriculum Review Process, the Curriculum Study Committees will address the treatment of multiple assessment tools.
- C. The District will develop opportunities for teachers to share their expertise and experiences with multiple assessment tools through curriculum writing, use of the Curriculum Development Framework, and professional development sessions.

- D. The District will develop and administer locally constructed tests in social studies, health, physical education, music and art to determine if students are meeting the required academic standards in these areas.
- E. Commencing with the 2006-07 school year and later, the District will utilize state constructed tests developed from and aligned with the state's required academic standards as these tests become available.
- F. In accordance with Minnesota State Statute, districts may use a student's performance on a statewide assessment as one of the multiple criteria to determine grade promotion or retention. Districts may also use a high school student's performance on a statewide assessment as a percentage of the student's final grade in a course, or place a student's assessment score on the student's transcript.
- G. Grading and reporting should always be done in reference to specific learning criteria. The specific criteria of the course must be clear about the academic standard, the various components considered in determining a grade, and the criteria used to evaluate the component.

Legal Reference:

Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations for Minnesota's Students)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.022 (Elective Standards)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.023 (Benchmarks)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (Statewide Testing and Reporting System)

*Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0010-3501.0180 (Rules Relating to Graduation Standards
Mathematics and Reading)*

*Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0200-3501.0290 (Rules Relating to Graduation Standards
Written Composition)*

Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0505-3501.0635 (K-12 Standards)

20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq. (No Child Left Behind Act)

Cross References:

Policy #601 District Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Policy #603 Program Improvement and Curriculum Development

Policy #606 Instructional Material Review and Selection

Policy #612 Differentiation

Policy #613 Graduation Requirements

Policy #515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

Adopted: May 18, 2006