



ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

POLICY:	618
ADOPTED:	07/31/98
REVISED:	06/22/20

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to institute a process for the establishment and revision of assessments to be used to determine how well students have achieved in meeting the Graduation Standards

II. General Statement of Policy

The district has aligned district curriculum by which students shall complete the Graduation Standards.

III. Definitions

- A. "Above-grade level" test items contain subject area content that is above the grade level of the student taking the assessment and is considered aligned with state academic standards to the extent it is aligned with content represented in state academic standards above the grade level of the student taking the assessment. Notwithstanding the student's grade level, administering above-grade level test items to a student does not violate the requirement that state assessments must be aligned with state standards.
- B. "Academic standard" means a summary description of student learning in a required content area or elective content area.
- C. "Below-grade level" test items contain subject area content that is below the grade level of the student taking the test and is considered aligned with state academic standards to the extent it is aligned with content represented in state academic standards below the student's current grade level. Notwithstanding the student's grade level, administering below-grade level test items to a student does not violate the requirement that state assessments must be aligned with state standards.
- D. "Benchmark" means the academic knowledge and skills students must achieve at each grade level or high school level to satisfactorily complete a state standard.
- E. "Career and college ready," for purposes of statewide accountability, means a high school graduate has the knowledge, skills, and competencies to successfully pursue a career pathway, including postsecondary credit leading to a degree, diploma, certificate, or industry-recognized credential and employment. Students who are career and college ready are able to successfully complete

credit-bearing coursework at a two- or four-year college or university or other credit-bearing postsecondary program without need for remediation.

- F. “Computer-adaptive assessments” means fully adaptive assessments.
- G. “Cultural competence,” for purposes of statewide accountability, means the ability and will to interact effectively with people of different cultures, native languages, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- H. “Elective standards” are the academic standards adopted by the school district in the subject areas of vocational and technical education and world languages.
- I. “Experiential learning” means learning for students that includes career exploration through a specific class or course or through work-based experiences such as job shadowing, mentoring, entrepreneurship, service learning, volunteering, internships, or other cooperative work experience, youth apprenticeship, or employment.
- J. “Fully adaptive assessments” include on-grade level test items and items that may be above or below a student’s grade level.
- K. “On-grade level” test items contain subject area content that is aligned to state academic standards for the grade level of the student taking the assessment.
- L. “Required standard” means a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, and the arts, or a locally adopted expectation for student learning in health or the arts.

IV. Establishment of Criteria for Assessment

- A. The Superintendent or designee shall establish criteria by which student performance of locally adopted Graduation Standards and elective standards are to be evaluated and approved. The criteria will be submitted to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, the criteria shall be deemed part of this policy.
- B. The superintendent or designee shall ensure that students and parents or guardians are provided with notice of the process by which program Graduation Standards will be assessed.
- C. Staff members will be expected to utilize staff development opportunities to the extent necessary to ensure effective implementation and continued improvement of the implementation of the Minnesota Academic Standards.

V. Standards for Minnesota Academic Standards Performance Assessments

A. Benchmarks

The school district will offer academic knowledge and skills to allow students to satisfactorily complete a state standard by the use of grade level or high school level benchmarks. These benchmarks will be used by the school district and its staff in developing tests to measure student academic knowledge and skills.

B. Local Assessments

Locally selected assessments are expected to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of the elective standards or other locally adopted standards. Scoring criteria for performance assessment of elective or other locally adopted standards include:

1. Authentic Course Assessments
2. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

C. Statewide Academic Standards Testing

1. The school district will utilize state constructed tests developed from and aligned with the state's required academic standards as these tests become available. If a state assessment is not available, the school district will determine if a student has met the required academic standards through locally developed assessments.
2. The school district will administer annually, in accordance with the process determined by MDE, the state accountability tests to all students in grades 3 through 8 and at the high school level as follows:
 - a. computer-adaptive reading and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8;
 - b. high school reading and mathematics and a high school writing test, when it becomes available; and,
 - c. science assessments in one grade in grades 3 through 5 span, the grades 6 through 8 span, and a life science assessment in the grades 9 through 12 span.
3. The school district will develop and administer locally constructed tests in social studies, health and physical education, and the arts to determine if a student has met the required academic standards in these areas.

4. Students for whom the statewide or locally constructed tests are inappropriate, as determined by the student's IEP, or students with limited English proficiency, shall be exempt from or provided appropriate, technically sound accommodations or alternate assessments for statewide and local testing with the approval of the student's parent or guardian.
5. The school district may use a student's performance on a statewide assessment as one of the multiple criteria to determine grade promotion or retention. The school district also may 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.
6. For students in grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year and later, the school district must record on the high school transcript a student's progress toward career and college readiness. For other students, this record of progress must be made as soon as practicable. In addition, the school district may include a notation of high achievement on the high school diplomas of those graduating seniors who, according to established school board criteria, demonstrate exemplary academic achievement during high school.

D. Student Participation

1. The Commissioner of Education must create and publish a form for parents and guardians that:
 - a. explains the need for state academic standards;
 - b. identifies the state assessments that are aligned with state standards;
 - c. identifies the consequences, if any, the school or student may face if a student does not participate in state or locally required standardized assessments;
 - d. states that students who receive a college ready benchmark on the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota state college or university in the corresponding subject area;
 - e. summarizes the provisions in Minn. Stat. § 120B.301(a) and (c);

- and
 - f. notifies a parent of the right to not have the parent’s child participate in the state and locally required assessments and asks a parent that chooses to not have a child participate in the assessments the basis for the decision.
2. The school district must post the form created by the Commissioner on the school district website and include it in the school district’s student handbook.

VI. Rigorous Course of Study Waiver

- A. Upon receiving a student’s application signed by the student’s parent or guardian, the school district must declare that a student meets or exceeds a specific academic standard required for graduation if the school board determines that the student:
 1. is participating in a course of study, including an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course or program; a learning opportunity outside the curriculum of the school district; or an approved preparatory program for employment or postsecondary education that is equally or more rigorous than the corresponding state or local academic standard required by the school district;
 2. would be precluded from participating in the rigorous course of study, learning opportunity, or preparatory employment or postsecondary education program if the student were required to achieve the academic standard to be waived; and,
 3. satisfactorily completes the requirements for the rigorous course of study, learning opportunity, or preparatory employment or postsecondary education program.
- B. The school board also may formally determine other circumstances in which to declare that a student meets or exceeds a specific academic standard that the site requires for graduation under this section.
- C. A student who completes a postsecondary enrollment options course or program or an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course or program is not required to complete other requirements of the academic standards corresponding to that specific rigorous course of study.

VII. Career Exploration Assessment

- A. Student assessments, in alignment with state academic standards, shall include clearly defined career and college readiness benchmarks and satisfy Minnesota's postsecondary admissions requirements. Students in grade 11 or grade 12 must be provided with an opportunity to participate on a nationally normed college entrance exam. Achievement and career and college readiness in mathematics, reading, and writing must also be assessed. When administering formative or summative assessments used to measure the academic progress, including the oral academic development, of English learners and inform their instruction, schools must ensure that the assessments are accessible to the students and students have the modifications and supports they need to sufficiently understand the assessments.
- B. On an annual basis, the school district must use the career exploration elements in these assessments, beginning no later than grade 9, to help students and their families explore and plan for postsecondary education or careers based on the students' interests, aptitudes, and aspirations. The school district must use timely regional labor market information and partnerships, among other resources, to help students and their families successfully develop, pursue, review, and revise an individualized plan for postsecondary education or a career. This process must help increase students' engagement in and connection to school, improve students' knowledge and skills, and deepen students' understanding of career pathways as a sequence of academic and career courses that lead to an industry recognized credential, an associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree and are available to all students, whatever their interests and career goals.
- C. All students, except those eligible for alternative assessments, must be given the opportunity to participate on a nationally normed college entrance exam in grade 11 or 12. A student under this paragraph who demonstrates attainment of required state academic standards on these assessments, which include career and college readiness benchmarks, is academically ready for a career or college and is encouraged to participate in courses awarding college credit to high school students. Such courses and programs may include sequential courses of study within broad career areas and technical skill assessments that extend beyond course grades.
- D. As appropriate, students through grade 12 must continue to participate in targeted instruction, intervention, or remediation and be encouraged to participate in courses awarding college credit to high school students.
- E. In developing, supporting, and improving students' academic readiness for a career or college, the school district must have a continuum of empirically derived, clearly defined benchmarks focused on students' attainment of

knowledge and skills so that students, their parents, and teachers know how well students must perform to have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without need for postsecondary remediation.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 – Educational Expectations for Minnesota’s Students
Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 – School District Process
Minn. Stat. § 120B.18 – Definitions
Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 – Required Academic Standards
Minn. Stat. § 120B.022 – Elective Standards
Minn. Stat. § 120B.023 – Benchmarks
Minn. Stat. § 120B.030 – Statewide Testing and Reporting System
Minn. Stat. § 120B.31 (System Accountability and Statistical Adjustments)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0640-3501.0655 (Academic Standards for Language Arts)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0800-3501.0815 (Academic Standards for the Arts)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0955 (Academic Standards in Science)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)
20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq. – Every Student Succeeds Act

Cross References: Policy 104 - School District Mission Statement
Policy 601 - School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals
Policy 613 - Graduation Requirements
Policy 616 - School District System Accountability