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618 - ASSESSMENT OF STANDARD ACHIEVEMENT

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 Graduation Standards.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district has established a procedure by which students shall complete the Graduation Standards. The school district strives to continually enhance student achievement of the Graduation Standards.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Rubric" means the criteria set by the Commissioner of Education that must be used by a district to score student work that meets the specifications of a content standard.
- B. "Benchmark" means the academic knowledge and skills students must achieve at each grade level or high school level to satisfactorily complete a state standard.
- B. "Elective standards" are the academic standards adopted by the school district in the subject areas of vocational and technical education; and world languages.
- C. "Profile of Learning" refers to the graduation content standards previously required by state law which the school district has retained as part of its locally established graduation requirements.

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 District 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. These assessments are embedded in courses for the students.:

C. Statewide Academic Standards Testing

1. Commencing with the 2005-2006 school year and later, 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 the Department, the state-constructed tests to all students in grades three through eight and at the high school level as follows:
 - a. annual language arts and mathematic assessments in grades three through eight and at the high school level for the 2005-2006 school year and later; and
 - b. annual science assessments in one grade in the grades three through five span, the grades six through nine span, and a life science assessment in the grades ten through twelve span for the 2007-2008 school year and later.
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 incapable of taking the statewide or locally constructed tests, as determined by the student's individualized education program team, or students with limited English proficiency who have been in the United States for fewer than three years, shall be exempt from statewide and local testing with the approval of the student's parent or guardian. The school district will report student exemptions to the Department consistent with the format provided by the Department. Alternative assessments shall be provided to students exempt from the statewide tests.
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.

D. Rigorous Course of Study Waiver

1. 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:
 - a. 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;
 - b. 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
 - c. satisfactorily completes the requirements for the rigorous course of study, learning opportunity, or preparatory employment or postsecondary education program.
2. 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.
3. A student who satisfactorily completes a postsecondary enrollment options course or program is not required to complete other requirements of the academic standards corresponding to that specific rigorous course of study.

Legal References:

Minn. Rule Parts 3501.0010 to 3501.0180 (Rules relating to Graduation Standards-mathematics and reading)

Minn. Rule Parts 3501.0200-3501.0290 (Rules relating to Graduation Standards-written composition)
Minn. Rule Part 3501.0370 subd.3 and subd. 5(Assessment and Scoring of Student Achievement)
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 Part 3501.0505-3501.0635 (K-12 Standards)
29 U.S.C. § 6301, et.seq. (No Child Left Behind Act)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Basic Standards Testing, Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEP, Section 504 Accommodation and LEP Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)