

Issaquah School District
Executive Limitations Monitoring Report

EL-12 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Annual Internal Report – April 25, 2024

The Board believes that every student should have access to all academic and social-emotional learning supports that are necessary for them to achieve their full potential. Grading practices should be equitable and homework should meaningfully contribute to overall student learning

The Superintendent certifies that the District is in compliance with EL-12 with exceptions.

The Superintendent shall not fail to establish and maintain a learning environment that is characterized by support and encouragement for high student achievement.

General Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the District sustains a learning environment that supports robust and rigorous learning experiences for every student, every day, in partnership with students and their families. I further interpret this to mean that the learning environment is supported by homework and grading practices that seek to reduce inequities that exist across the district in student learning experiences.

Accordingly, the Superintendent may not fail to:

1. Ensure that grading practices are equitable and based on a comprehensive and objective review of best practices research.
 - a. Determination of student grades should be driven by demonstration of mastery.
 - b. Students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery.
 - c. Grading practices should be consistent across grades and secondary departments.
 - d. Departmental grading practices should be consistent across schools.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that grading practices reflect the learning of academic content for all students, are based on research, and are accessible to diverse learning needs and styles. I interpret this to mean that grades communicate to students and their families about their progress in learning academic content and course expectations. I further interpret this to mean that the District ensures alignment across the system so that:

- a. Students have a clear understanding of mastery and how there are different methods for how to show mastery.

- b. Students know how to access the process and journey of learning through multiple opportunities to show mastery (e.g. late work, clarity around what mastery looks like in each like course).
- c. Students experience transparency and consistency in approach to grading across grades, courses, and across schools.
- d. Students will not be graded on non-academic factors.

Evidence:

Elementary:

Elementary teachers are provided with a grading guide to support consistent application of standards-based report card. Elementary report card information found [on our website](#). Staff and parent feedback from the 2022-23 school year initiated the development of a Report Card Committee that began in the fall of the 2023-24 school year, with implementation of the new elementary report card in 2024-25. The District has been working on grading and homework practices for several years, including keynote speakers at all district meetings, dedicated collaboration time and a previously agreed upon implementation plan. Post COVID, this work has been reinstated as a priority for new leadership.

Secondary:

Progress toward alignment at the high school level in 2022-23 include course teams aligned practices on course description, grading policies of grade percentages, grading categories or weight, assessment criteria and recovery opportunities, including late work policies. This work aligned to the implementation plan that was created initially by former staff members under a different administration and does not yet meet all of the expectations set in this Executive Limitation. Going forward, the remaining expectation of consistency across schools is expected to be accomplished in 2024-25.

- In August 2022: professional development time assigned to align gradebook for each course; categories, weights, frequency, volume, aligned for recovery / late work below standard work, including a “crosswalk activity” for teachers to analyze current practices.
- In Fall of 2022, administrators collected information from teachers to report the course teams agreed upon components and how these components would be stated in the team in syllabus
- During October and January non-student days, secondary teachers focused on Culturally Responsive teaching practices, Trauma Informed teaching practices, and High Leverage teaching practices. This work is connected to the ongoing work of examining teaching and assessment practices through the lens of student need.
- In June of 2023, Principals led professional development and provided collaboration time for course teams to align on four stated categories.
- In August 2023, high school teachers reviewed agreements on alignment and how SEL lessons would be embedded across all classes. This information was reported to Administrators.

Survey results for the District developed soft skills survey provide evidence directory from students about our progress in grading and homework practices. Students in grades 9 – 11 reported higher than average agreement with the opportunity to submit work after the initial deadline and slightly higher than average agreement with the opportunity to recover from substandard assessment results.

2022-23

9th - 11th Soft Skills Survey: <i>Most of my classes provide me an opportunity to turn in assignments late if I miss the first deadline/due date.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	72%
	Number respondents	2566

2022-23

9th - 11th Soft Skills Survey: <i>Most of my classes provide me an opportunity to improve my grade if I get a grade lower than a C.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	58%
	Number respondents	2566

7th grade students reported general agreement with the opportunity to submit work after the initial deadline and with the opportunity to recover from substandard assessment results.

2022-23

7th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>Most of my classes provide me an opportunity to turn in assignments late if I miss the first deadline/due date.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	78%
	Number respondents	1030

2022-23

7th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>Most of my classes provide me an opportunity to improve my grade if I get a grade lower than a C.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	70%
	Number respondents	1030

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

2. Ensure that homework practices are equitable and based on a comprehensive and objective review of best practices research.
 - a. Homework practices should be consistent across grades and secondary departments.

- b. Homework practices should be consistent across schools, not necessarily including elementary special programs and accelerated offerings such as AP, IB, and high school courses at middle school.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that teachers establish homework expectations aligned to best practices, are calibrated and consistent across grade levels and content areas, are developmentally appropriate, and are accessible to students with diverse learning needs and styles. Homework practices should prioritize learning over volume in accordance with the course expectations. I further interpret this to mean that homework assignments are intentionally focused to support the learning outcomes and objectives.

Evidence:

Elementary:

District [Regulation 2422](#) and the Guidelines for [Elementary Homework](#) help teachers and principals calibrate and maintain consistency across the elementary grade levels. Each elementary school website includes homework guidelines, consistent across schools. Evidence of this alignment at all sixteen elementary schools is the move from individual homework policies published on each school site to one common message in all 2022-23 Elementary handbooks. A leading indicator of continued work in this area is the policy listed in the 2023-24 handbook that also refers to ISD Regulation 2422 and Procedure 2422P.s. A leading indicator of continued work in this area is the policy listed in the 2023-24 handbook that also refers to ISD Regulation 2422 and Procedure 2422P.

Secondary

In addition to the District regulation 2422, the Homework Policy [2422P](#) outlines the guidelines on the responsibilities for teachers, students and parents regarding homework and the impact of special programs on homework. This policy has not been reviewed since 2016 and will be reviewed and updated as necessary in 2024-25. [Principles for Secondary Grading Practices](#) synthesize the research on grading practices that are equitable and provide students with multiple opportunities to show mastery of the learning objectives. These grading practices also apply to the grading of homework.

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

3. Solicit regular feedback from stakeholders on grading and homework practices, with consideration for overall student workload.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the District and school staff make every effort to incorporate feedback from constituent groups on grading and homework practices to reduce stress for students and calibrate for consistency across schools.

Evidence:

Student surveys offer an opportunity to hear from students about how they experience the learning environment, including workload questions. In the 2022-23 school year, student representatives surveyed their peers on homework practices. This information was provided to the board.

District-developed soft skills and exit surveys provide evidence directory from students about our progress. In 2022-23, 46% of 9th – 11th graders and 56% of 7th graders reported satisfaction with the volume of homework. When asked this question connected to students’ desired outcomes, 74% of 8th grade students and 86% of 5th grade students reported alignment with the amount of homework in relation to their desired grades.

All the student surveys results can be viewed [\[on our website\]](#). Going forward, all survey questions will include a neutral response for consistency.

2022-23		
9th – 11th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>How do you feel about the volume of homework you have?</i>	Percent satisfied with amount of homework	46%
	Number Respondents	2566

2022-23		
7th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>How do you feel about the volume of homework you have?</i>	Percent satisfied with amount of homework	56%
	Number Respondents	1045

		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
5th grade Exit Survey: <i>I believe the amount of school work I have outside of the school day is reasonable for the grades I want to earn.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	92%	86%	86%
	Number Respondents	1229	1403	1315

		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
8th grade Exit Survey: <i>I believe the amount of school work I have outside of the school day is reasonable for the grades I want to earn.</i>	Percent agree or strongly agree	75%	74%	74%
	Number Respondents	1109	1009	1034

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

4. Ensure access to student-driven opportunities to explore non-core options, especially in the areas of CTE, STEM and fine, visual and performing arts, providing career-connected learning.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that each secondary school will provide a variety of electives and choices that support students’ passion and potential.

Evidence:

Secondary:

Students in all secondary schools engage in a course selection process each winter, for the following school year. Principals solicit student feedback about desired electives, both for new or novel electives or to seek information about the need to increase access to highly requested electives. High school course guides show all the courses available to students. Through the course selection process, students and caregivers are provided the opportunity to review the student’s transcript and use the course guide and selection process to plan for the following school year. Students select courses of interest that meet graduation requirements and select additional electives that align with their personal pathways.

- [Issaquah](#) High School course guide
- [Liberty](#) High School course guide
- [Skyline](#) High School course guide

In addition to in-building elective options, students can elect to participate in regional options.

- In 2022-23, 72 students participated in Washington Network for Innovative Careers (WANIC) programs, exploring careers in firefighting, health sciences, technology design (DigiPen), sports medicine and automotive.
- As reported in EL 14, Career and Technical Education (CTE) provides students opportunities for students to explore courses that prepare them for the world of work and post-high school work options in one of 14 career clusters. Middle school CTE courses include; Design and Modelling, Makerspace, Medical Detectives, Automation & Robotics, Web design, Game design, Digital photography, STEM foods, representing 1,617 middle school CTE courses accessed.
- A variety of high school courses, representing 9,444 semester or yearlong CTE courses were taken in 2022-23. The CTE graduation pathway, introduced in 2020, specifies two consecutive years of successful completion of an approved CTE series as an approved graduation pathway. In 2023, 1013 graduates had access to meet this requirement using the CTE pathway.

Total high school courses of CTE enrollment in 2022-23	
	Total
Liberty High	2512

Issaquah High	3819
Skyline High	3113

- Running Start offers an opportunity for students to access desired electives. In the 2022-23 school year, 833 students registered for Running Start classes. In the senior exit survey for 2022-23, students reported *access to electives not offered in high school* as their reason to take a running start class.
- The ISD Online program also allows students to access desired electives not offered in high school. In 2022-23, 173 students reported *access to an elective not offered at the high school* as their reason to take an online course.
- Internships and work experience options are key components of the [Gibson Ek](#) and [ACT programs](#) approximately 2-3 times a week.
- As reported in ENDS 2, 2,569 middle school and 4,015 high school students took a Fine or Performing Arts class in 2022-2023. Trimester enrollment by middle school and semester enrollment by high school and grade below.

Total middle school trimesters of Fine Art enrollment in 2022-23				
	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade	Total
Beaver Lake	434	618	380	1432
Cougar Mountain	394	334	273	1001
Issaquah Middle	501	496	358	1354
Maywood	421	439	309	1169
Pacific Cascade	427	343	302	1072
Pine Lake	470	530	420	1420

Total high school semesters of Fine Art enrollment in 2022-23					
	9 th grade	10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade	Total
Liberty High	390	382	305	244	1321
Issaquah High	757	522	432	415	2126
Skyline High	702	681	327	354	2064

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

5. Consider student opinion in academic remediation and acceleration opportunities.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the District will support secondary students and their families through dialogue and analysis of pathways and options to support student selection of courses. I further interpret this to mean that students are aware of the types of courses and remediation that support their learning needs, academic and career pathways, and the result of these choices in relation to future course opportunities and pathways.

Evidence:

School course guides that are also listed in 12.4 above which highlight the self-select course opportunities for students

- All high school students participated in High School and Beyond Planning (HSBP) activities that align with their individual plan (example of assignments can be [High School and Beyond Plan website](#) .
- The District offers summer school courses available for credit retrieval or grade improvement. In the summer of 2023, 756 courses were accessed for credit recovery and 266 courses were accessed for grade improvement.
- ISD Online offers courses for acceleration. In 2022-23, 291 students reported *acceleration* as the reason they took an ISD online class. While not specifically designed for remediation, students can take an ISD online class to for remediation purposes.
- High school students needing remediation mid-year can access a canvas course during guided studies to earn credit.

High School and 7th grade soft skills survey results show the percentage of students taking advanced classes.

2022-23

9th – 11th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>If you decided to challenge yourself and take advanced classes, let us know how many advanced classes you are taking</i>	None	34%
	1 - 2 advanced classes	37%
	3 - 4 advanced classes	19%
	5+ advanced classes	9%
	Number Respondents	2566

2022-23

7th grade Soft Skills Survey: <i>If you decided to challenge yourself and take advanced classes, let us know how many advanced classes you are taking</i>	None	29%
	1 - 2 advanced classes	52%
	3 - 4 advanced classes	16%
	5+ advanced classes	3%
	Number Respondents	1045

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

6. Ensure that opportunities for social-emotional learning are embedded throughout the K-12 experience.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that Social Emotional Learning (SEL) opportunities are aligned with Washington State and CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) standards across all grade levels and content areas and are delivered in developmentally appropriate ways.

Evidence:

The District follows the Washington State Standards for SEL, and utilizes materials that are aligned with CASEL standards

The adopted Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum, Second Step, is aligned with [Washington State Standards](#) and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) standards. The documents below show how the CASEL standards appear in the Second Step Curriculum for grades K-8.

- [Second Step K-5 CASEL Alignment](#)
- [Second Step Middle School CASEL Alignment](#)
- [ISD K-5 Second Step Pacing Guide 22-23](#)
- [ISD Middle School Second Step Scope & Sequence 22-23](#)

Lessons were provided to high school teachers and delivered through the advisory period at each of the high schools. However, high school students and high school teachers were dissatisfied with the lessons. As a result of this feedback, a committee with high school students, staff, and district office administrators was created to review current practices and make recommendations for the 2023-2024 school year. The committee held three meetings and created a three-year plan for the delivery of high school SEL lessons that are imbedded in every classroom, with the focus on Self-Awareness and Self-Management as the focus competencies for 2023-24. The remaining competencies will be embedded in 2024-25 and 2025-26. In recognition of the continued efforts at the high school level to integrate the Washington State Standards for SEL in secondary classroom instruction, our implementation is an exception.

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

7. Provide adequate access to counseling and mental health supports.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that each school will have counseling services and mental health resources, with clear communication to students and families about how to access these services.

Evidence:

The Issaquah School District's comprehensive counseling program includes responsive and integrated counseling services and mental health support. Information about, and access to these services is available on district and school websites [Counseling and Mental](#)

[Health](#). The district website shows the name and contact information for counselors by building.

- In 2022-23 school year, there were 47 school counselors, serving all schools in the district. School counselors have a caregiver resource sheet that can be shared with parents as needed. [ISD Caregiver Resource Sheet](#).
- The universal screeners used in the ISD (BIESY at elementary and SDQ at secondary) allowed school teams to proactively reach out to parents if students report high internalizing behaviors. Going forward, the ISD will use the nationally normed universal screener of SAEBRs to solicit information from students about risk.

The District maintains a contract with Swedish to provide School-Based Mental Health Counselors. In 2022-23, 769 students accessed this service, for a total of 4,854 student visits to a Swedish School-Based Mental Health counselor. The District website shows contact information for the [School-Based Mental Health](#) service providers. The Swedish School-Based Mental Health team created SEL lessons for Emotional COT and Anxiety for High Schools. The district worked with the Swedish leadership and made our requests clear over several meetings for greater visibility and discussion about the data, and the need for flexible staffing to allow for response to vacancies or need at individual buildings. These new elements were included in the 2023-24 contract, which is still awaiting finalization. As a result of this collaboration, the Swedish leadership team suggested and implemented a survey to providers, students, and caregivers to solicit feedback on program development.

Also available on the district website are updated resource lists for families in crisis including grief and suicide prevention resources, and community resource contacts for support in the areas of abuse, addiction, advocacy, basic needs, interpreters, immigration services and youth and family services, as examples. Each secondary counselor provided an additional website presence through Canvas, accessible by students. All building-based counselors have a counseling department website, and going forward, these websites will be consistent and aligned with district standards.

...the Superintendent may not fail to:

8. Ensure that special education students have equitable opportunities and necessary supports to reach their full potential in an environment that is welcoming, safe, and as inclusive as possible.

Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the District is continuously reviewing options and programs and partnering with families and educational staff to implement special education services and fulfill a student's individualized education plan.

Evidence:

During the 2022-23 school year, the Special Services department served an annual average of 1,868 students ranging in ages from three through twenty-one years of age across thirteen different eligibility categories (developmental delays, specific learning disabilities, visual impairments, emotional/behavioral disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism, deaf blindness, deafness/hard of hearing, multiple disabilities, speech or language impairment, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, and traumatic brain injury).

During the 2022-23 school year, special education enrollment increased from 1,663 students (September 2022) to 2,002 students (June 2023), representing a 20.4% increase in the total number of students who were eligible and received special education services over the course of the year.

As a District, we are continuing to ensure all students receiving special services **have access to, and robust support in learning** with their peers. As we continue to increase and embed inclusionary practices across the system, we are still on a journey and have made progress, but have further to go. This is noted as an exception in this monitoring report.

Preschool:

During the 2022-23 school year, the Special Services department offered Early Childhood Education (ECE) programming for students ages three through five who qualify for special education services at three district sites: Briarwood, Holly Street Early Learning Center, and Discovery. Early Childhood Education programs support students in early access to high quality instruction that supports students in being prepared both academically and socially to enter kindergarten.

K-12 schools:

Across elementary, middle and high schools, a continuum of special education services are offered. Learning Resource Center – Two (LRC-2) programming is designed to serve students with moderate to severe disabilities and complex needs. These programs are offered regionally at elementary and middle school and at each comprehensive high school. Learning Resource Center – One (LRC-1) programming is designed to offer specially-designed instruction in academics, behavior, and social areas as indicated within a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and may take place in a resource classroom setting or within an inclusive co-taught/push-in setting across all Issaquah School District K-12 buildings.

Transition program:

The Special Services department also offered transition programming for students ages eighteen through twenty-one at the Academy for Community Transition (ACT) program or through individualized programming.

In alignment with the District’s dedication to equity and the core tenets of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the Special Services department continued to focus on expanding inclusionary practices beyond co-teaching throughout the 2022-23 school year. This work aims to ensure that students with disabilities have equitable opportunities and necessary supports to reach their full potential through a comprehensive continuum of inclusive services, with personalized support for every learner to excel academically within the least restrictive educational environment as measured by Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data. Implementation of inclusionary practices was stalled during COVID and has resumed. Further development in inclusive practice beyond co-teaching continued at all levels in 2023-24 and ongoing development of a comprehensive continuum of inclusive services is expected next year and in the following years.

LRE-1 indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 80% to 100% of their educational day. LRE-2 indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 40% to 79% of their educational day. LRE-3 is the most restrictive of programming and indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 0 to 39% of their educational day. Data for all other placements (Home Hospital, Non-Profit Agency, etc.) are included. Note that all students attending programs following 12th grade ACT, are listed as 12th graders, which is a known impact to the data at the LRE 3 level as there are no general education peers in this program.

During the 2022-23 school year, the Special Services department continued targeted and strategic efforts to increase LRE and access for all students who receive special education services to general education environments with appropriate accommodations and supports as a strategy to disrupt predictable disparities in student outcomes for students who receive special education services.

2022-23 Least Restrict Environment (LRE) percents by grade				
Grade	LRE 1 (80-100%)	LRE 2 (40-79%)	LRE 3 (0-39%)	All other placements
K	80.8%	6.8%	12.3%	0.1%
1	83.3%	7.4%	7.4%	2.3%
2	73.3%	13.3%	11.4%	2.0%
3	70.3%	22.0%	7.6%	0.1%
4	63.0%	25.2%	9.4%	2.4%
5	74.2%	15.2%	9.1%	1.9%
6	68.3%	28.9%	2.1%	0.7%
7	59.9%	27.9%	8.2%	4.0%
8	72.5%	19.5%	3.4%	4.6%
9	68.0%	22.4%	8.0%	1.6%
10	59.0%	30.9%	6.5%	3.6%

11	75.0%	14.7%	8.6%	1.7%
12	51.9%	19.9%	19.2%	9.0%

Note: LRE data is provided by OSPI. This data is from November 1, 2022, Federal count date. Total n = 1,792 students served in Special Services.

Departmental review and continuous improvement:

Special Services conducted a review of available data which revealed a significant gap in achievement on the SBA ELA assessment (53.3% gap between students who receive special services compared to all students), and a significant gap in achievement on the SBA Math assessment (47.7% gap between students who receive special services compared to all students. Targeted efforts to address this gap and strengthen outcomes:

Allocated resources to:

- Invested in professional development in literacy and the science of Reading with Dr. Roberts Frank
- Continued partnership with Seattle Children’s Autism Center and Dr. Orlich to conduct school-based evaluations using the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule
- Continued partnership with Brooks Powers Group in tiered interventions specific to reengagement, school refusal, student mental health, and program development in the inclusive behavioral support programs at IMS and IHS.

Examined best practices and access to high quality materials by:

- Conducted a comprehensive curriculum audit; developed a divestment and investment plan to assume high-quality materials are available and in use for all students and programs; including literacy, mathematics, executive functioning, and social, emotional and behavioral development.
- Convened the Literacy Continuum Committee to review the district’s approach to SDI delivery in the area of literacy, resulting in an examination of available research and recommendations for next steps to align with evidence-based curriculum and practices.
- Continued professional development on different models of inclusionary practices beyond co-teaching to include consultation and teaming models. Yearlong focus to reinforce the connection between Universal Design for Learning and Inclusionary Practices.
- Delivered professional development focused on culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy in meaningful post-secondary transition, connecting the IEP transition planning to High School and Beyond Planning and graduation pathways.
- Sustained ongoing PD and support for the implementation of ECE Creative Curriculum, TS Gold and the Pyramid Model for our youngest learners.
- Implementation of specific curriculum for Secondary LRC 2 and ACT in Healthy Relationships and evidence based vocational curriculum.

Engaged in family partnerships with:

ECE parents/caregivers:

- Three ECE family engagement nights provided families support and resources to:
 - Promote Learning and development for the whole child
 - Social emotional learning
 - Increase family engagement and personal connections
 - Increase frequency and quality of communication between families and educators
 - Increased coordination of strategies and care

Family and Community partnerships:

- Team met to collaborate on authentic engagement opportunities and for parents/caregivers to provide feedback on practices in Special Services. Outcomes included:
 - Design and test a Special Services Meeting Feedback Survey
 - Draft a parent/guardian handbook for IEP's and 504's
 - Clear desire from parents/guardians to have more transparency and greater access to available supports for mental health needs for students with disabilities
 - Support and information for parents/caregivers about how to help their own student
 - Desire for more regular and effective communication between school and home
 - Clearer explanations of parental rights during meetings
 - Strategic Planning Committee met and reviewed the Special Services website, resulting in recommendations to improve the site as a source of information for families and caregivers.

Ongoing parent/caregiver community resource connections

- Financial strategies and estate planning (3X per year) to inform parents of available resources in estate planning, including pre-guardianship, post-guardianship and independent living
- The ARC of King County (3X per year) to share information from the ARC, King County and Washington State to share what help and community resources are available, including; waivers, respite care, therapies, behavioral support, etc.
- DHH family engagement event: "Small Talk: Social Skills Development in Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing", shared ideas and activities that can be implemented at home to support students.

Board Acceptance: April 25, 2024