

Adopted: May 14, 2007
Revised: June 14, 2011
Revised: January 24, 2012
Revised: March 12, 2013
Revised: March 11, 2014
Revised: October 14, 2014
Revised: June 9, 2015
Revised: October 11, 2016
Revised: November 14, 2017
Revised: January 22, 2019
Revised: March 10, 2020
Reviewed: February 14, 2023



618 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to institute a process for the establishment and revision of assessments to measure achievement toward meeting the Minnesota Academic Standards, track academic progress over time, and provide Minnesota graduates information related to career and college readiness.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district has established a procedure by which students shall complete Graduation Requirements. This procedure includes the adoption of performance assessment methods to be used in measuring student performance. The school district strives to continually enhance student achievement of Graduation Requirements.

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 specific knowledge or skills that a student must master to complete part of an academic stand by the end of the grade level or grade band.
- 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” means a locally adopted expectation for student learning in career and technical education and world languages.
- I. “Experiential learning” means learning for student 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. *[Note: Fully adaptive mathematics and reading assessments must be used for grades 3 through 7 beginning in the 2015-2016 school year and later.]*
- 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 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 Director of Teaching and Learning shall establish criteria by which student performance of local academic 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 Director of Teaching and Learning shall ensure that students and parents or guardians are provided with notice of the process by which academic 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 assessments under the Minnesota Academic Standards.

V. STANDARDS FOR MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

A. Benchmarks

The school district will offer and students must achieve all benchmarks for an academic standard to satisfactorily complete that state standard. These benchmarks will be used by the school district and its staff in developing tests to measure student academic knowledge and skills.

[School districts are required to formally establish a periodic review cycle for academic standards and related benchmarks in health, world languages, and career and technical education.]

B. Statewide Academic Standards Testing

1. The school district will utilize statewide assessments developed from and aligned with the state's required academic standards as these tests become available to evaluate student progress toward career and college readiness in the context of the state's academic standards.
2. The school district will administer annually, in accordance with the process determined by the Minnesota Department of Education, the state-constructed tests to all students in grades three through eight and at the high school level as follows:
 - a. Computer-adaptive reading and mathematics assessment in grades three through eight:
 - b. High school reading in grade 10, mathematics in grade 11 and a high school writing test, when it becomes available; and
 - c. science assessments in one grade in the grades three through five span, the grades six through eight span, and a life science assessment in the grades nine through twelve span (a passing score on high school science assessments is not a condition of receiving a diploma).
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. 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.
5. For students in grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year or 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.
6. Students who do not meet or exceed the Minnesota Academic Standards, as measured by the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment administered in High School, must be informed that admission to a public school is free and available to any resident under 21 years of age. The school district will determine how this notice is given.

C. Student Participation

1. The Minnesota Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) 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 Minnesota Statutes section 120B.301(a) and (c); and
 - f. notifies a parent/guardian of the right to not have the parent's/guardian's child participate in the state and locally required assessments and asks a parent/guardian that chooses to

not have their 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 satisfactorily 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. 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, will be encouraged 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.

To the extent state funding for college entrance exam fees is available, the school district will pay the cost, one time, for an interested student in grade 11 or 12, who is eligible for a free or reduced-priced meal, to take a nationally recognized college entrance exam before graduating. The school district may require a student who is not eligible for a free or reduced-priced meal to pay the cost of taking a nationally recognized college entrance exam. The school district will waive the cost for a student who is unable to pay.

- 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.018 (Definitions)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations and Graduation Requirements for Minnesota's Students)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.022 (Elective Standards)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.023 (Benchmarks)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement; Striving for the World's Best Workforce)
MINN. STAT. § 120B.30 (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 3501.0820 (Academic Standards for the Arts)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0960 (Academic Standards in Science)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501-1400-3501.1410 (Academic Standards for Physical Education)
20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)

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

Appendix to 618 – Assessment of Student Achievement

Curriculum Cycle 2023-2033											
Phase	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033
Study & Preparation (Year 1)	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 English Language Arts (ELA)	World Languages	Career and Technical Education (CTE)	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 English Language Arts (ELA)	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math
Program Design (Year 2)	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies
Implementation (Year 3)	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA
Implementation (Year 4)	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering
Refine & Sustain (Year 5)	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts
Refine & Sustain (Year 6)	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health
Refine & Sustain (Year 7)	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages	CTE
Refine & Sustain (Year 8)	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA	World Languages
Refine & Sustain (Year 9)	6-12 English Language Arts	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math	6-12 ELA
Refine & Sustain (Year 10)	K-5 Math	6-12 English Language Arts	World Languages	CTE	K-12 PE/Health	K-12 Arts	K-12 Science/Engineering	K-5 ELA	K-12 Social Studies	6-12 Math	K-5 Math

Phase	Steps Included
Study & Preparation (Year 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Establish intent, charge, team membership · Analyze MDE standards · Research current best practices and resources · Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment including relevant data
Program Design (Year 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Select instruction and assessment materials, if needed · Begin developing a curriculum, instruction, and assessment map aligned to state/national standards · Create an implementation and evaluation plan · Share plan and selected materials with School Board and WBWF
Implementation (Year 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide training for staff · Follow implementation and evaluation plan · Revise curriculum map as needed · Update Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports as needed
Implementation (Year 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide training for staff · Follow implementation and evaluation plan · Revise curriculum map as needed
Refine & Sustain (Year 5-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Revise curriculum map as needed · Analyze data to determine shifts in instruction and/or resources

Assumptions

1. All current CHPS courses will be mapped using Atlas online software. On an annual basis, Teaching and Learning will support the creation of individual teachers' journal maps to generate specific records of what was taught in each content area. The journal maps will be collected as data for the next round of study and preparation within the curriculum cycle.
2. New courses may be added according to school board procedure each year. These courses proceed directly into curriculum writing the year prior to being offered for students. Once the courses are developed, the class will join its content area in the predetermined cycle phase.
3. Special Education, Gifted, and English Learners' needs will be reviewed within the schedule for the content areas.
4. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum such as Responsive Classroom, Developmental Designs, Bully Prevention will be a key component of curriculum development in all content areas on an annual basis.
5. College and Career readiness efforts across grade levels and content areas as well as careers exploration will be a key component of curriculum development in all content areas on an annual basis.
6. Technology integration will be a key component of curriculum development in all content areas on an annual basis.
7. MDE Standards may change at a schedule other than what Columbia Heights Public Schools has determined for curriculum review. The review plan will be adjusted as needed so that the school district is in compliance with MDE expectations.
8. Board approved curriculum cycle will be posted online. Curriculum adoptions will include teacher input, community comment, and board approval.
9. Adjustments to reading, math, and science curriculum will receive highest priority in terms of ongoing improvement and resources.
10. All curricula adoptions will come in at or under budget.