

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: Ends 2.1, Part 1 – Student Competence

Date Report Submitted: 2/22/2024

Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 3/14/2024

The Board has received and reviewed the Superintendent's Monitoring Report referenced above. Following the Board's review and discussions with the Superintendent and his representatives, the Board makes the following conclusions:

Ends Reports:	Executive Limitations Reports
- The Board finds that the Superintendent: - has achieved the goals established in the policy. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals. - is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals, but a greater degree of progress is expected in some areas.* - is not making reasonable progress in achieving the goals established. * - cannot be determined*	- The Board finds that the Superintendent: - is in compliance, with the acknowledgement that there is always more work to be done. - is making reasonable progress towards compliance, except for item(s) noted.* - is not making reasonable progress toward compliance.* - cannot be determined*
<i>*see comments below (No. 3)</i>	

2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

Overall, the report is comprehensive with multiple efforts to understand student test performance, find more and creative ways to measure it, and compare district performance to identified high-performing districts and wider state performances. These efforts give us a good glimpse into how we have been impacted by pandemic learning loss and how rebound is reflected in standardized testing. This is one of the most important reports we receive. The board is happy to see that more students are meeting math standards in grades 3-8 and 10, and we hope to continue to see it improve this year. ELA scores dropped in a similar fashion to other districts and still remain above state average. While math scores are a challenge, they do indicate a rebound. Science scores looking strong compared to state average. Proficiency gaps decreased in a variety of areas. Math growth is looking strong.

With recognition of the challenging context due to COVID effects, the significant improvement in meeting math standards relative to other districts (figs 6,8) is commendable. The Board was very pleased to learn about the great efforts on new curricula adoption and professional learning that may well have fueled this commendable outcome.

Our strong relative performance in meeting standards for science in grades 5 and 8 (figs 10,12) is also commendable and an encouraging sign of recovery from COVID impacts. Our understanding is that we may be seeing positive impacts from the curricula changes made in years past and the potential impact of our outdoor education work. Commendable progress and outcomes.

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3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

The numbers showing progress are comparatively closely related to previous years, and it is not clear if the small differences are statistically significant. Some other districts have shown more progress with learning loss rebound and our hope is to do better going forward. It is understood that the learning loss is multifaceted and that this is just how it is measured through standardized testing, which we recognize does not tell the whole story. While the impacts of the pandemic are improving in many areas, the effects are unsurprisingly still evident across certain stubborn proficiency and growth gaps.

One interpretation of the testing impacts to grade 10 students is that these anomalous scores may be the result of COVID era effects due to reduced student familiarity with the standardized tests and a lack of understanding for the use of these standardized test scores specific to this cycle of measurement. The Board was glad to learn that we will likely see improvement in this area in future cycles. Our district stands out for our strong focus on proficiency gaps and the district team's efforts to close these gaps. We anticipate continued progress in this area as we see reduced COVID era effects and with the efforts already underway and would like to voice support for the importance of these continued efforts.

4. Comments on the report itself.

As usual, these reports get better every year with finding new and creative ways to measure performance and understand the data. This is an exceptionally rich and transparent report on key outcomes related to The Bellingham Promise. Thank you for such a well-developed and documented report.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

None identified.