618 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

[Note: With the repeal of the Profile of Learning, school districts no longer are required to assess student achievement in accordance with Section V. of this policy. School districts which retain any portion of the Profile of Learning graduation requirements, however, may choose to retain all or a portion of Section V. of this policy and may implement and manage the Profile of Learning content standards in whatever manner they deem appropriate.]

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 the Graduation Standards.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district has established a procedure by which students shall complete the Graduation Standards. 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 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 specific knowledge or skill that a student must master to complete part of an academic standard by the end of the grade level or grade band.

E. "Computer-adaptive assessments" means fully adaptive assessments.

F. "Elective standards" means a locally adopted expectation for student learning in career and technical education and world languages.

G. "Exemplar" means an actual example of student work on a performance assessment determined to represent student performance that earns a score of "3" or "4" in accordance with the rubric as defined in item "F." ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete this definition.]***

H. "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.]***

I. "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.

J. "Performance assessment" means any assessment method that will measure demonstrated student performance of the specifications of a content standard. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete this definition.]***

K. "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. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete this definition.]***

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.

M. "Rubric" means the criteria set by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) that must be used by a district to score student work that meets the specifications of a content standard.

N. "Specifications" means what a student must know and be able to do to complete a Profile of Learning content standard. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete this definition.]***

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

A. The ***[school board/superintendent/director of instruction]*** shall establish criteria by which student performance of the Profile of Learning or other 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. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete the reference to the Profile of Learning.]***

B. The superintendent 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 Profile of Learning Graduation Standards at all levels and/or transition to assessments under the Minnesota Academic Standards. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete the reference to the Profile of Learning.]***

V. STANDARDS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

A. Performance assessments are expected to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of the Profile of Learning Graduation Standards. ***[Note: School districts that have eliminated the Profile of Learning content standards as part of their curriculum should delete the reference to the Profile of Learning.]***

Scoring criteria for performance assessment include:

1. A score of "4," that signifies student work that meets or exceeds the rubric for the score of "4";

2. A score of "3," that signifies student work that meets the rubric for the score of "3";

3. A score of "2," that signifies student work that meets the rubric for the score of "2";

4. A score of "1," that signifies student work that meets the rubric for the score of "1";

5. A score of "0," that signifies incomplete work on the specifications of a content standard;

6. Incomplete student work receiving a score of "0" does not complete a

content standard.

7. When a student, under provisions of an individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan, completes the specifications of a modified content standard as determined in the student's plan, the school district shall record the score as "pass-individual";

8. When a student's IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan exempts the student from a content standard, the school district shall record "exempt" for that content standard;

9. When an LEP student, under the provisions of an LEP individual graduation plan completes the specifications of a modified content standard, the school district shall record the score as "pass-LEP"; and

10. When an LEP student, under the provisions of an individual graduation plan, completes all specifications of a content standard solely in a language other than English, except for work in learning area ten, the school district shall record the score as "pass-LEP."

B. The school district may use one or more assessment methods to measure student performance on one or more content standards.

C. The grade level of a student shall not prohibit a student from receiving the highest state exemplar score upon completion of a content standard. A student may receive a score of "0" that signifies incomplete student work on a standard. The assessment of the content standard must be included as part of the students grade for a subject or course.

D. The school district will convene an annual meeting of selected teachers and administrators to review performance assessments used to measure student performance. Recommendations and comments regarding the procedures for assessment of student achievement will be submitted to the District Curriculum Coordinator for review.

VI. 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 MDE, the state-constructed tests to all students in grades 3 through 8 and at the high school level as follows:

   a. annual reading and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 7;

   b. state-developed grade 8 and high school reading and mathematics tests aligned with state academic standards; and

   c. annual science assessments in one grade in the grades 3 through 5 span, the grades 6 through 8 span, and a life science assessment in the grades 9 through 12 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 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.

C. 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 post-secondary 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 post-secondary 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 post-secondary 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 post-secondary 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. Commencing with the 2014-2015 school year, student assessments, in alignment with state academic standards, shall include career and college readiness benchmarks. Mathematics, reading, and writing assessments for students in grades 8 and 10 must be predictive of a nationally normed assessment for career and college readiness. This nationally recognized assessment must be a college entrance exam and given to students in grade 11. This series of assessments must include a college placement diagnostic exam and contain career exploration elements.

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. Students in grade 10 or 11 not yet academically ready for a career or college based on their growth in academic achievement between grades 8 and 10 must take the college placement diagnostic exam before taking the college entrance exam under Section VII.D. Students, their families, the school, and the district can then use the results of the college placement diagnostic exam for targeted instruction, intervention, or remediation and improve students' knowledge and skills in core subjects sufficient for a student to graduate and have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without remediation.

D. All students, except those eligible for alternative assessments, must be given the college entrance part of these assessments in grade 11. 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.

E. 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.

F. 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 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)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (Statewide Testing and Reporting System)
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.* (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 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)