Report to the School Board

Academic Milestones
June 9, 2011 School Board Workshop
Report Prepared by Yvonne Selcer, Board Chair
John W. Schultz, Ph. D. Superintendent

Overview
The Hopkins School Board Policy 616, School Accountability has been under development, which calls for the development of academic milestones. This report and agenda provides background to the process that the Board’s Policy Monitoring Committee will use to further develop the academic milestones.

Primary Issues to Consider
School District Policy 616

Supporting Documents
The full report begins on the next page.
- Policy 616: School District System Accountability
- District Strategic Plan, with current Performance Indicators highlighted
- Portland Public Schools: Measuring Results: The Milestones Framework (to serve as an example of the type of research the Monitoring Committee/Administration will be engaging in this summer)
**Academic Milestones**

In the March, 2011 board meeting, board members took significant action by approving Policy 616, “School District Accountability”. Under section III, A. this policy states:

“The Board and administration will develop academic milestones that are used to monitor and evaluate student progress. Administration will provide any supporting data that clarifies or further complements the process.

The academic milestones and supporting data will be reviewed annually. If the review indicates actions should be taken to address the findings, the Board will direct the superintendent to develop and submit an action plan for board approval.”

This action set into policy the development of Academic Milestones to provide enhanced system wide accountability and alignment to the work of our district.

At this workshop the board will engage in a brief informational discussion around the purpose of these Academic Milestones, and the work the Monitoring Committee will be doing this summer with Administration to develop Academic Milestones recommendations for board discussion and consideration this fall. It may also be helpful to board members to review Policy 655, “Eliminating the Achievement Gap”, to give further context to this work.

{As you see in the excerpt above, Policy 616 also refers to a reporting process around the Academic Milestones. Discussion of that reporting process will be linked to our visioning process with the superintendent this fall around our district use of data (see Dr. Schultz’ 2011-12 goals and action steps).}

Board members will also find our Hopkins Public Schools District Strategic Plan in the background materials. Over time, it has become apparent that some of the Performance Indicators in the Strategic Plan measure the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, and some Performance Indicators may be more suited to the system-wide accountability the Academic Milestones will provide the board, administration and community. Work will be intensive around any transitioning of any Performance Indicators to the Academic Milestones.

Finally, the Academic Milestones developed by the Portland Public Schools are included in the background materials for this agenda item. This is one example of the research that is available around appropriate Academic Milestones for public school systems. The Monitoring Committee and our district administration will engage in further research this summer as it works to formulate recommendations to bring to the full board for consideration this fall.

The Monitoring Committee welcomes research-based input, as well as comments and questions, from board members as it conducts this work over the summer.

Academic Milestone recommendations will be brought before the board for discussion, and formal approval if the board deems it appropriate, in the fall.

---

# Hopkins Public Schools

## Strategic Plan

Adopted April 2009

---

**Values**

*The core Values of our district are those values we hold that form the foundation on which we perform our work and conduct ourselves. These core Values guide us as we work to achieve our mission and objectives through our strategies.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Excellence</strong></th>
<th><strong>Innovation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our intentional efforts are toward continuous improvement, and our commitment is to deliver rigorous programming that affords all individuals the opportunity to excel as we instill a passion for learning.</td>
<td>Our commitment is to provide innovative learning opportunities to help students master the skills required of them as they participate in a constantly evolving, global environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Equity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Inclusion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our commitment is to raise the achievement of all learners, creating an environment in which learners of all races, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds achieve to their fullest potential.</td>
<td>Our commitment is to ensure that each learner feels welcome as a unique and contributing member of our diverse community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Partnership</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fiscal Responsibility</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our commitment is to engage families and community members in creating a learning environment that is characterized by excellence, equity, and ethical behavior.</td>
<td>Our commitment is to manage district finances so all programs and services are supported by reliable resources available to the district.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Excellence. Every School. Every Student. Every Day*
Mission Statement

The Mission reflects the loftiest goal of the school district. It is a statement of our desired future, and our identity.

Serving a community rich in culture and diversity, the Hopkins Public Schools develops in all students the skills, knowledge, and passion for lifelong learning.

Objectives

Objectives are the achievable, feasible, and verifiable results that ensure our District will achieve our mission. We reach the Objectives through the Strategies. Objectives are verified by the Performance Indicators.

- Each student will demonstrate academic growth in order to meet or exceed Hopkins School District standards.
- Hopkins achievement data will reflect growth that eliminates the demographic predictability and disproportionality of the highest and lowest achieving groups.
- Each learner will develop and consistently display cultural respect and demonstrate cultural competence.
- Community members will be informed, connected, and engaged in the work of the Hopkins Public Schools.

Strategies

Strategies are the actions established to accomplish the Objectives and achieve our Mission. Strategies reflect what we are doing to support programs and schools. Each Strategy has one or more Action Plans.
**Achievement Strategy**

We will create culturally responsive, high-achieving learning environments that engage each learner, staff, and family as essential partners, in order to reach continuously higher levels of student learning.

21st Century Teaching and Learning

We will focus upon core content, learning skills, and instructional tools in order to promote high rigor and achievement for all learners, as we prepare students for success in the 21st century.

A. Core Content: Core content includes reading, language arts, world languages, fine arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health literacy, and global awareness.

1) Balanced Reading and Writing Instruction
   We will increase student proficiency in reading and writing through a balanced literacy approach. Balanced literacy includes explicit and systematic instruction, including the key components of reading and writing skills, application, comprehension, and motivation.

2) Mathematics Instruction
   We will increase student proficiency in mathematics through continued articulation of math concepts, examination and refinement of curriculum, and delivery of effective instructional strategies.

3) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
   We will embed STEM concepts and skills within real-world curriculum at every level to better prepare our students for the 21st century.

4) World Language
   We will develop a K-12 World Language plan that will prepare students to succeed in a 21st century, global community.
5) Curriculum Review and Innovation
We will embed 21st Century Skills and Power Standards within the curriculum review process, and explore opportunities for curriculum alignment and integration.

B. Learning Skills: Learning skills include life and career skills, cultural proficiency, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration.

1) Cultural Proficiency
As we progress into the 21st Century, the Hopkins School District strives to seek cultural proficiency, which we define as: The ability to use knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices that esteem all races and cultures, and lead to the academic achievement and personal development of all learners.

2) Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
We will increase student access to and success within rigorous coursework through Pre-AP, AP, and AVID coursework and strategies.

3) Graduation Planning, “6–12 and Beyond”
We will assist students and families with the expanded information and knowledge necessary to transition successfully across elementary and secondary education levels, in preparation for college-readiness and productive lives beyond high school.

C. Instructional Tools: Instructional tools include information and communication technologies, print materials, and other media and multimedia tools.

Technology Integration and Multi-Media
We will integrate information technologies into curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to stimulate learning, collaboration, communication, and creativity, as we maximize intellectual and personal growth.
D. Assessment for Student Learning: We will develop, analyze, and utilize common standards and assessments in order to inform instruction and increase student learning.

Power Standards and Assessment
We will identify and align Power Standards within each curriculum area, and utilize common formative and summative assessments to measure student progress.

**Communication Strategy**

We will create a responsive and culturally sensitive communication system that allows us to inform, connect, and engage all District stakeholders.

**Inform:** We inform all families and community members about Hopkins Public Schools’ academic excellence, culture of innovation, and how we nurture interests and passions of students and staff.

**Connect:** We collaborate with all families and community members to establish an environment that welcomes involvement and fosters good will.

**Engage:** We nurture relationships with all families and community members to sustain connections that enhance our ability to achieve excellence in every school, with every student, every day.

**Performance Indicators for the Objectives**

Performance Indicators measure the effectiveness of our strategies and action plans as we move toward our mission.

**Objective:** Each student will demonstrate academic growth in order to meet or exceed Hopkins School District standards.

**Objective:** Hopkins achievement data will reflect growth that eliminates the demographic predictability and disproportionality of the highest and lowest achieving groups.
Indicators

- **3rd Grade Reading Performance MAP Score**
  Grade 3 Reading MAP scores will be collected and analyzed each spring for both achievement and growth.

- **Number of Students that are Double Advanced in Mathematics-Pre Algebra, Algebra, Geometry**
  At the end of each school year, we will compile the number of students taking a math course above their grade level; this would include students in grades 6-9.

- **Percentage of Students Receiving Academic Recognition on Achievement Tests (Advanced Placement, Scholastic Aptitude, and American College Testing)**
  Scores on tests such as Advanced Placement, SAT, and ACT will be gathered in the summer following each school year.

- **Analysis of Credits to Track Graduation**
  Credit analysis will be compiled for students in grades 9-12 at the end of each school year to determine how many students are progressing appropriately towards graduation.

- **Attendance and Suspensions**
  Attendance information will continue to be gathered. Out-of-school suspension information is compiled at the end of each school year. In-school suspension data will be compiled for secondary schools.

**Objective:** Each learner will develop and consistently display cultural respect and demonstrate cultural competence.

**Indicators**

- **Revision and use of the Cultural Competence domain toward reflecting Cultural Proficiency in the HCM model**
- **Development and application of a student observation tool/checklist**
- **Development and use of a non-licensed staff checklist**

**Objective:** Community members will be informed, connected, and engaged in the work of the Hopkins Public Schools.

**Indicators**

- **We will conduct a survey annually to assess the effectiveness of the communication and marketing plan.**
 felonies. Every School. Every Student. Every Day

- We will analyze the ongoing development of the website, as well as the usage by the community, using analytical tools.
- We will conduct a satisfaction survey of effectiveness of the new website.
- We will achieve 90% Infinite Campus parent portal activation.
- We will develop qualitative indicators from focus groups that will assess the effectiveness of connecting and engaging all families.
I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the strategic and operational work of the Hopkins School District promotes higher academic achievement, utilizes data to make programming decisions, and involves stakeholder input.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The School District maintains a system to continuously review and improve local standards, instruction, curriculum, and assessment, which includes substantial input by staff, students, parents or guardians, and local community members. The School District will be accountable to the public and the state through annual reporting.

III. ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES

A. Academic Milestones

The Board and administration will develop academic milestones that are used to monitor and evaluate student progress. Administration will provide any supporting data that clarifies or further complements the process.

The academic milestones and supporting data will be reviewed annually. If the review indicate actions should be taken to address the findings, the Board will direct the superintendent to develop and submit an action plan for Board approval.

The current academic milestones are available via the following link: ______ (LINK TO BE ADDED)

B. Strategic Plan

A strategic plan will be created that outlines the Hopkins Public Schools strategic objectives, which are the achievable, feasible, and verifiable results that ensure the District achieves its mission. The strategic plan will be reviewed and submitted to the School Board for approval on an annual basis.
The School District strategic plan is available via the following link:_____________ (LINK TO BE ADDED)

C. Site Plans

Each school will create a plan that contains site-specific strategies that support the achievement of the District strategic plan objectives. The site plans will be reviewed and submitted to the School Board for approval on a biennial basis.

D. Educational Services Advisory Committee

The School Board will establish the Educational Services Advisory Committee (ESAC) to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum affecting state and district academic standards.

ESAC, working in cooperation with the Strategic Planning Committee, Site Planning Committees, Assessment Committee, Technology Integration Steering Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, and Early Childhood Family Education Advisory Committee, and other ad hoc or temporary District committees created for the purpose of curriculum and instruction review, will recommend to the School Board rigorous academic standards, student achievement goals and measures, assessments, and program evaluations.

ESAC will, to the extent possible, be comprised of two-thirds community representatives and will reflect the diversity of the community.

ESAC information, including committee membership, can be accessed via the following link: ___________ (LINK TO BE ADDED)

E. Assessment Committee

A District committee created by the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment will develop a plan for assessment of student progress toward graduation Standards, as well as program evaluation data for use by ESAC in the curriculum review process.

F. Curriculum Review

Curriculum is reviewed following a process developed by the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment department. The review process allows for a systematic review of a content area. The current review cycle is available via the following link:_____________ (LINK TO BE ADDED)

G. Student Evaluation
The School Board annually will provide high school graduates or GED recipients who receive a diploma or its equivalent from the School District with an opportunity to report to the board on the following:

1. the quality of district instruction, curriculum, and services;
2. the quality of district delivery of instruction, curriculum, and services;
3. the utility of district facilities; and
4. the effectiveness of district administration.

IV. REPORTING

An “Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement” will be approved by the School Board by October 1 of each year. The School Board will publish a summary of the report in the local newspaper with the largest circulation in the district, by mail, or by electronic means such as the School District website. If electronic means are used, the School District must publish notice of the report in a periodical of general circulation in the School District. The School District must make copies of the report available to the public on request. A copy will be sent to the Commissioner by October 15 of each year. The public report will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Student achievement goals for meeting the Minnesota Academic Standards;
2. Result of local assessment data and any additional test data, including all data required by Minnesota statute;
3. School District improvement plans including staff development goals;
4. Progress on previous improvement plans;
5. Amount and type of revenue attributed to each educational site as defined in Minnesota Statute;
6. Names of ESAC members, dates their terms expire, method of selection, and application dates;
7. A summary of the ESAC work and recommendations.
8. Periodic reports on constituencies’ satisfaction with schools;
9. Biennial evaluations of the school district testing programs according to the following:
   a. written objectives of the assessment program;
   b. names of tests and grade levels tested;
   c. use of test results; and
HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

d. student achievement results compared to previous years.

V. ANNUAL REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Board.

Adopted: April 28, 2011
Measuring progress and setting goals

At Portland Public Schools, our job is to provide 46,000 students the instruction and support they need to keep up, catch up or reach beyond learning benchmarks. Our goal is to prepare students for success at every grade, so they graduate on time and are prepared for college, career and citizenship.

That is why we have set measures — our Milestones Framework — to gauge student achievement at key learning stages, from the earliest grades through graduation day.

We also set goals for better student performance so we can hold ourselves accountable to our families and our community — and so we can see what educational strategies are working to produce even better results.

Focus is on students at key stages

We're using key assessments at each Milestone — from test results to attendance data — to evaluate our school district's success in preparing our students for success at the next grade level and beyond.

- **Ready to read** — At the beginning of first grade, all students should be ready to read, so they have a foundation for future academic success.

- **Reading to learn** — By the end of third grade, students should be reading to gain an understanding of their world, in a variety of subjects.

- **Ready for high school** — In middle grades, students should have strong attendance habits and the writing and math skills to grasp more demanding content in high school.

- **On track to graduate** — When entering 10th grade, students should have passed core subjects with strong grades and have enough credits to be on the road to graduation.

- **Graduate from high school on time** — Students should have the skills needed for college or a career.

We're also tracking our success in closing the achievement gap. We're charting the disparity between the performance of white students and the lowest-scoring ethnic group at each Milestone.

We are using this information to fine-tune our educational approaches and focus academic support on the students who need it most. We must do better to educate all our students equally well.

Targeting better results

This year, Portland Public Schools has set demanding targets for higher student achievement in all schools. We’re zeroing in on areas that predict long-term success: early reading, middle-grade writing and earning credit early in high school.

By next year, we’re aiming to increase achievement in these areas by 5 percentage points and reduce the achievement gap in these areas by 5 percentage points.

We’re holding ourselves accountable for improvements in these key areas because Portland’s future depends on the success of our students.

---

### Measuring Results: The Milestones Framework

1. **Enter 1st Grade: Ready to Read**
   - Students recognize letter names and sounds and parts of words.

2. **End of 3rd Grade: Reading to Learn**
   - Students are able to exceed the benchmark on the state reading test.

   **Target:** In 2009, % of students exceeding the benchmark will increase by 5 points.

   - 2008-09: 42%
   - 2009-10 Target: 47%

3. **Middle Years: Ready for High School**
   - Student attendance is 90% or greater.
   - Students meet the benchmark on the state writing test.
   - Students take and pass 8th grade algebra.

   **Target:** In 2009, % of students meeting the 7th grade writing benchmark will increase by 5 points.

   - 2008-09: 55%
   - 2009-10 Target: 60%

4. **Enter 10th Grade: On Track to Graduate**
   - Students complete 9th grade with 6 credits and a C grade in core subjects.

   **Target:** In 2009, % of students entering 10th grade with 6 credits and a C grade in core subjects will increase by 5 points.

   - 2008-09: 44%
   - 2009-10 Target: 49%

5. **12th Grade: Graduating on Time Ready for Work & College**
   - Students graduate on time.
   - Students meet college-ready benchmark on at least 3 ACT tests...
Questions & Answers

Q: What does the Milestones Framework mean for my student?
A: Milestones are key checkpoints to determine how your student is progressing through school. Each Milestone links to the next. If your student is ready to read in first grade, for example, he or she is more likely to be reading to learn in third grade and so forth.

Q: What is my role in helping my student meet his or her Milestones? What is the teacher’s role?
A: Collaboration between families and teachers — and students — is essential. Ask your student’s teacher how you can help your student. See tips on this page.

Q: How will I know my student is meeting the Milestones?
A: PPS will report annually on student performance as a whole but won’t issue individual student reports on Milestones. Talk with your student’s teachers to be sure he or she is on track.

Q: My student is already on track academically. What does the Milestones Framework mean for us?
A: Milestones can help you look ahead to keep your student on track.

Q: Are the Milestones unique to Portland Public Schools?
A: School districts use educational data in different ways to increase student achievement. This framework is unique, but we borrowed ideas from other districts.

Q: What is Portland Public Schools trying to achieve with Milestones?
A: We want all of our students on track at all levels. Analyzing student performance at each Milestone helps us see who is not on track and provide needed support.

Q: How do the Milestones address the achievement gap in Portland Public Schools?
A: PPS is focused on the achievement of all students and also on closing the achievement gap between white students and students of color. At every Milestone, we are measuring performance of students overall and subgroups of students. We’ve set targets to improve overall student performance and to close the gap.

Q: Why is closing the achievement gap important?
A: Our nation’s strength depends on everybody being ready to compete. PPS must do more to educate all students equally well. Our students of color tend to fare worse academically than their white peers, yet skin color should not predict academic success. Closing the gap means removing that predictability.

Q: With the focus on closing the achievement gap, will students who are high-achieving be ignored?
A: We want all students to show continuous growth, regardless of their starting point. Our underlying goal: Every student succeeds.

How You Can Help Your Student

Preschool and elementary: Reading
• Read daily to your child — labels, signs, books.
• Visit the library regularly.
• Have your child read to you.
• Be a reader yourself.

Middle grades: Writing, math, good attendance & study skills
• Read and discuss writing assignments.
• Learn teachers’ expectations in writing and math.
• Have your child find a buddy to study with and to deliver assignments when the student is absent.
• Set aside homework time.
• Set clear attendance expectations and consequences.
• Expose your student to diverse experiences, for example, farmers markets and riding the MAX, to increase interest in the world.

High school: Core subjects, extracurricular activities
• Ask for the school’s graduation requirements. Create a checklist of courses with your student.
• Learn about tutoring and support at your school.
• Encourage activities that draw out your student’s academic strengths: debate, drama, student government, newspaper, chess, etc.
• Encourage sports/activities that build discipline, attendance and health.
• Attend your student’s games and events.

For more tips, go to www.pps.k12.or.us. Click on the Milestones Framework box under “Stay Connected.”