

Published on *Park Ridge-Niles School District 64* (<http://www.d64.org>)

School District 64 Students Continue High Achievement in 2013, Focus Ahead Will Be on Fueling Individual Student Growth

By *btramm*

Created 11/01/2013 - 16:18

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 students continued to achieve at high levels in 2013 measured by a variety of state and local assessments, according to Dr. Lori Hinton, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning.

"As we look ahead, we believe that maintaining a clear focus on individual student growth – and the high-yield instructional strategies that support such growth – will help us fuel ongoing improvement in student achievement," Dr. Hinton recommended.

Dr. Hinton reported to the Board of Education on October 28 at a Committee-of-the-Whole: Student Achievement. She delivered a comprehensive review of student performance from different sources during the 2012-13 school year, including: the 2013 Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT); Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) computerized testing; and District 64's unique Educational Ends assessments.

Dr. Hinton compared trend data spanning a five- to seven-year period. She reported that District 64 students "continue to earn competitive scores on standardized assessments and demonstrate exceptional achievement in all curricular areas through our Educational Ends framework."

She pointed out that District 64 is now feeling the impact of significant state initiatives, such as the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), that are challenging educators here and across the nation moving forward.

Continuing to support teachers with the use of data to inform instruction will be a critical step in the current and upcoming school years, she stated. "District 64 teachers in recent years have become more skilled at reviewing data to identify student needs and differentiating instruction for small groups of students, and we will be boosting professional development for teachers on these high yield instructional strategies," Dr. Hinton added.

In addition, Dr. Hinton noted that teachers are also receiving further training on interpreting MAP assessment data and differentiating instruction to better help their students to achieve their individual growth targets. Tracking student growth has been identified as an area of focus in the Board of Education's goals for 2013-15, and will be addressed in more detail in upcoming reports, she stated.

- **Educational Ends – measuring how District 64 educates the “whole child”**

For more than a decade, District 64 has captured a more robust view of what students need to learn as part of its goal of educating the whole child. These indicators are part of the unique “Educational Ends” that track academics along with higher order thinking and problem-solving skills, social-emotional development, physical development, exposure to a wide range of experiences in the arts, and development of a positive attitude toward learning.

Dr. Hinton reported that over the past five years, “on target” performance has increased from 62% in 2007-08 to 84% in 2012-13, when 87 assessments were administered. She noted that the remaining 16% of assessments were within 10% of the target.

Looking forward, Dr. Hinton noted that: “District 64 will be evaluating the Ends to be sure that each assessment provides information that most accurately reflects our learning priorities and is aligned with the new Common Core State Standards.”

- **MAP tests – measuring personal student growth**

District 64 also utilizes a unique kind of standardized testing, called MAP, to provide data on reading and math performance. Students in grades 3-7 typically take the computerized tests in fall and spring, with grade 2 initially assessed in winter and grade 8 only in the fall.

MAP tests have two important features that make them extremely useful in tracking and predicting student performance, Dr. Hinton reported.

“Since the tests are adaptive – the questions each student is asked are changed based on how the previous question was answered – they can help identify what each student knows and needs to learn next,” she stated.

“And, because student scores are reported as a unique ‘RIT’ number – which is an equal interval scale, like feet and inches – educational growth can be easily tracked from year to year, independent of grade level or age,” she pointed out.

For 2012-13, Dr. Hinton reported that: “The District’s mean scores have increased over the past five years at all grade levels in reading and math, and our students continue to achieve at levels significantly higher than national means.”

Dr. Hinton noted that for reading and math, about a quarter of District 64 students perform above the 75th percentile for District 64 norms, which relates to the 86th to the 90th percentile nationally in reading and the 85th to 88th percentile nationally for math.

Most notably over the past five years, Dr. Hinton pointed out that District 64 has seen a decrease in the percentage of grades 3-7 students performing below the 25th percentile in reading. For math, District 64 has seen a significant increase in the percentage of students in grades 2, 3 and 8 performing above the 75th percentile for District 64 norms.

MAP also identifies each student’s “expected” growth based on individual scores. The

percentage of District 64 students in grades 3-7 meeting their growth targets in reading is described as "above average," while for math, their performance qualifies as "ambitious growth," according to MAP standards. The five-year average for reading is 56.3% and for math, it is 60%, Dr. Hinton reported.

- **ISAT – measuring how students meet state standards**

All students in grades 3-8 took the state tests in reading and math; only students in grades 4 and 7 were tested in science.

Although District 64 has historically achieved high levels of performance on both ISAT reading and math, Dr. Hinton reported that changes in the cut scores mandated by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) across Illinois this year mean that the percentage of students in the "meets" or "exceeds" standards categories have decreased at the District level by 11-14% for 2013.

In addition to cut score changes, Dr. Hinton reported that ISAT test items also were changed this year to include questions that reflect the Common Core State Standards, which Illinois has adopted for math and reading. "About 20% of the questions in the 2013 ISAT were based on the CCSS," she reported. The ISATs will sunset in 2014 and will be replaced by new testing in 2014-15 more closely aligned with the CCSS provided through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers (PARCC), she noted.

Looking at trend data for reading, District 64 student performance "remains strong, with the majority of students meeting or exceeding standards over the past seven years," Dr. Hinton observed.

Overall, 83% of District 64 students in 2013 met or exceeded reading standards using the new cut scores, compared with 94% using the previous scaling. Dr. Hinton particularly noted an upward trend in the percentage of students exceeding standards at grades 5 and 8 over the past three years.

Turning to math, Dr. Hinton reported a similar impact on scoring, with the majority of students meeting or exceeding standards over the past seven years. Overall, 82% of students in 2013 met or exceeded math standards using the new cut scores, compared with 96% using the previous scaling. In math, Dr. Hinton particularly noted that the percentage of students exceeding standards in grade 8 had increased by 16 percentage points over the past three years.

For science, District 64 performance on the ISAT remains strong with a minimum of 93% of grade 4 and 7 students meeting or exceeding standards over the past three years. Science cut scores and assessments were not altered this year.

Another ISAT measure is adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind Act toward the goal of 100% proficiency by 2014. Dr. Hinton reported that District 64 as a whole did not achieve the AYP goal for 2013, and only Franklin elementary among the seven District 64 schools did so.

Dr. Hinton reported that individual ISAT student test results have already been shared with

parents throughout the District, along with a new newsletter about 21st century learning and the Common Core State Standards.

- **New Illinois Report Card offers expanded metrics**

In her report to the Board, Dr. Hinton also previewed features of the ISBE's revamped School Report Card provided annually for every school, district and the state. She pointed out new features including a two-page "At a Glance" summary as well as information about student growth based on two years of ISAT performance.

For 2013, Dr. Hinton reported that District 64 has been assigned an average growth value of 107.4 for reading and 106.9 for math, which are both higher than the state averages of 102.1 for reading and 101.4 for math.

District 64 is distributing the new Report Cards for each school to parents after the official October 31 release date.

- **District 64 website for reports and meeting video**

A wide array of information on student achievement along with the report cards now are available for easy access via the "State Report Cards" page of the District 64 website (www.d64.org).

#

Source URL (retrieved on 11/01/2013 - 19:07): <http://www.d64.org/subsite/dist/news/2013/11/01/school-district-64-students-continue-high-achievement-2013-focus-ahead->