

Curriculum & Instruction

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Educate Every Child.

The principle work of the Curriculum and Instruction Department is to assist teachers and other instructional staff in facilitating exceptional academic and social progress for each student in the Tigard-Tualatin School District.

Spotlight on the

Common Core State Standards

The State of Oregon recently joined 46 other states in adopting new national standards (learning targets) and assessments in Mathematics and English/Language Arts called the “Common Core State Standards.” The Common Core are designed to ensure all students are ready for college and/or career no later than the end of high school, as opposed to our traditional - and soon to be obsolete - Oregon State Content Standards, which were focused on minimum proficiency levels scaffolded towards high school graduation. The Common Core are aligned to rigorous international standards from the highest achieving countries and, since students from across the U.S. will be assessed with a common national assessment aligned to one set of standards (starting in 2014-15), Oregon’s students will be held accountable to more challenging benchmarks than in years past. This represents a significant shift in rigor for our students; for example, in a recent national analysis comparing the rigor in current state standards and assessments, Oregon’s 4th grade reading standards ranked #49 – amongst the least demanding in the nation (wedged between Tennessee and Georgia). All the while, the stakes for our students are high...in Oregon, all students must demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing and math at this new, more rigorous level by the end of their high school career in order to obtain a standard high school diploma.

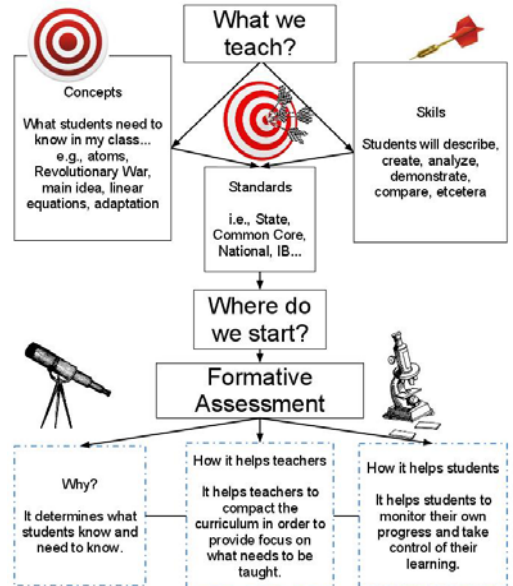
In TTSD, a team of teachers representing every school has been meeting since August to review the Common Core to identify potential gaps or misalignment in our current instructional program and to prioritize the standards in each grade level that have the most leverage for student success in life, in the next grade level, and on the test. The team also drafted a timeline of activities designed to prepare our teaching staff, community and students for the Common Core, culminating in 2014-15 with the new national assessment. In the months ahead, each school’s representative on the Common Core Team will be meeting with their principal to plan activities aimed at incorporating the Common Core into staff development, curriculum, instruction and assessment practices, and community communications. [Click here](#) to review a recent presentation to the TTSD School Board on the Common Core, the draft timeline, and find links to other Common Core resources.

Upcoming Professional Development:

To review & register for Professional Development Opportunities: [Click here](#)

January & February 2012 -- Thursday January 19: New Teacher Training ◇ Thursday January 26: C.A.R.E. Seminar # 3 ◇ Friday February 10: Eighth Grade Science PD ◇ Tuesday February 14: Sixth Grade Science PD ◇ Wednesday February 15: Action Research for Innovative Technology Pilots ◇ Wednesday February 15: Sheltered Instruction for LA / SS SET Teachers ◇ Wednesday & Thursday, February 15-16: Beyond Diversity ◇ Thursday February 16: Seventh Grade Science PD ◇ Wednesday February 22: High School Physics / Chemistry ◇ Wednesday February 22: PASS - Equity ◇ Thursday February 23: High School Biology / Life Science ◇ Monday February 27: Sheltered Instruction for Math / Health SET Teachers ◇ Wednesday February 29: Common Formative Assessment / Proficiency ◇

Why Formative Assessments?



With the formative assessment process, teachers and students collaborate and use evidence to increase student ownership of their learning success. Assessments can be used for many purposes; how the results are used determines whether or not the assessments are formative or summative. Formative assessments provide an opportunity to impact daily instruction and help to determine the next steps for student learning. They are an on-going snapshot of student progress throughout the instructional process. Formative assessments are often referred to as assessments “for learning.” There is no final mark or summative grade in a grade book. It supports learning in two ways: you can inform your instruction based on evidence that will yield immediate benefits to student learning, and students can use evidence of their progress to manage and adjust their own learning. Summative assessments, such as end of unit tests or state assessments, are assessments “of learning,” and measure a student’s end product or overall learning **after** a learning unit.

The formative assessment process captures instructional time by focusing instruction where it is needed.

Be watching for professional development opportunities about formative assessment and proficiency based practice this spring and summer.

Elementary Writing Curriculum Renewal to be Accelerated

Recent elementary teacher survey results, TTSD writing data analysis, and the state's adoption of the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) all point to the need to accelerate an elementary writing curriculum renewal process in Tigard-Tualatin. Teacher input and OAKS writing results indicate that instructional time, curricular coherence and professional development are areas in need of district-wide attention. The CCSS are far more rigorous than current Oregon writing standards. This month the Oregon Department of Education updated their curriculum adoption schedule to prioritize the curricular changes brought forth by the adoption of the Common Core. TTSD hopes to follow suit. Curriculum and Instruction is seeking creative funding opportunities (such as grants) that will support the work of an elementary writing renewal committee over the next year. The renewal committee would review current writing data and

research, develop a position paper, and align instructional materials with TTSD-prioritized Common Core writing standards.

In December, C&I conducted a survey of elementary teachers to gather information about elementary writing. Teachers were queried how much instructional time is used for writing, how many students are out of their classes during writing instruction, which materials they use, and how similar their instruction is to that of their colleagues. They were also asked to describe the essential components of an elementary writing program and their professional development needs. Significant findings include:

- At least 15 different published writing programs currently in use, and many teachers create their own materials.
- 90% of teachers reported that their instruction is very similar/somewhat similar to their grade

level colleagues, while 10% reported it is not similar or they are not sure.

- 46% of teachers reported that their instruction is very similar/somewhat similar to their colleagues school wide, while 35% reported it is not similar or they are not sure.
- Teachers requested more instructional time dedicated to writing.
- Teachers requested professional development to include collaboration and planning time with colleagues.

AS a district we have experienced a four-year downward trend on the OAKS 4th grade writing assessment. In 2007-08, 56% of students met the benchmark. In 2010-11, 50% met the benchmark. 58% of white students met the benchmark last year, whereas 30% of Hispanic students met. Elementary writing is the only content area in which TTSD students are performing below the state average.

The new Common Core State Standards require students to demonstrate increased levels of writing proficiency with the ultimate goal of college and career readiness. In order for students to graduate with a standard diploma they will need to demonstrate proficiency on the Common Core writing standards by the high school level. Generally the CCSS are increasingly detailed, require students to perform more sophisticated tasks, and focus heavily on informative writing. Compare the following standards for glimpse:

Kindergarten Oregon Standard: *Write (unconventionally) simple messages or directions for a specific reason—or for a specific person or specific people.*

Kindergarten Common Core Writing Standard: *Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.*

We hope to recruit interested elementary school teachers and parents to join the writing curriculum committee in the coming months if funds allow. Please watch for future news to join the C&I team in an effort to align, adopt and support a writing program designed to help students meet the new Common Core.

Tigard Tualatin University

In Summer 2011, the Tigard-Tualatin University (TTU) was launched with the primary goal of offering high-quality, relevant, and affordable professional development to our teachers... classes “taught by TTSD teachers, for TTSD teachers.” Another purpose of TTU was to provide leadership opportunities for district teachers by creating an effective way to share their pedagogical and content expertise. An important aspect of all TTU classes is a focus on Collaborative Action Research; all summer classes periodically meet throughout the school year to foster ongoing collaborative reflection and analysis on the impact of new practices learned in the summer on student engagement, access and achievement.

Of the 105 teachers who took a TTU class this year, 98% used tuition reimbursement and/or the Professional Educator Fund (PEF) to pay for their course and subsequent PSU credits. According to course feedback forms: 100% of TTU students would recommend a TTU class

to a colleague, 98% will use the skills they learned in their classrooms, and 98% found their instructors responsive or highly responsive to their learning needs. Congratulations to TTU instructors on a job well done!

Six classes were offered this year:

- **Proficiency-Based Assessment & Grading** (Susan Payne & Kim Lindsey)
- **Launching the Writer’s Workshop K-5** (Julie Walker)
- **Technology with a Purpose: Getting Your Curriculum Online** (Jill Hubbard)
- **Technology Tools to Improve Efficiency & Assessment** (Dan Rott)
- **GoogleDocs** (Rhiannon Boettcher)
- **Action Research for Innovative Technology Pilots** (Sarah Lundy & Dan Goldman)

[Click here](#) to learn more about TTU and keep your eye out this spring for information on TTU 2012!

Middle Years International Baccalaureate

The MYP, or the Middle Years Program, is one of three programs offered by the International Baccalaureate (IB). As its mission states, the International Baccalaureate works with schools to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. The IB has an international reputation for rigor and preparing students for college success.

Our two high schools currently offer the IB Diploma Program as an option for accelerated students in grades 11-12. Now, our three middle schools and two high schools are in the process of considering implementation of the IB MYP, which is designed specifically to provide a rigorous and relevant curriculum, not just to “accelerated students,” but to all

middle level learners. The program is structured to help teachers and students respond in a flexible way to varied learning needs, yet maintains consistently high standards. Its inclusivity is consistent with TTSD’s vision that “each student is challenged by a rigorous academic program.”

[Click here](#) to learn more about a) the overarching philosophy and specific principles, aims and objectives of the MYP; b) how the program aligns with (and helps prepare students for success with) the new, more rigorous Common Core State Standards which will be tied to high school graduation requirements; c) the multi-year timeline and coinciding processes for TTSD schools exploring the MYP; and d) decision-making processes for becoming an MYP school.

Assessment: OAKS, DIBELS, Math Fluency, MAZE

OAKS:

Once again last year, TTSD teachers, support staff and administrators helped our students achieve at very high levels on state assessments. We continue to best our prior year's performance at each grade level while our students far outperform the state averages on content area tests in reading, math, and science.

Effective Behavior & Instructional Support

EBIS Teams throughout the district are gearing up to review their academic and behavioral data at the end of the first semester with an eye on equity. At least two times per year, school-wide meetings are held to determine the effectiveness of core programs and to make necessary adjustments if programs are not meeting the needs of most students. Teams review attendance data, OAKS scores, MAZE and DIBELS results, grades, and behavioral data such as Office Discipline Referrals. This data is disaggregated by race and other variables.

School EBIS Teams use these data to address questions such as: Are 80% or more of students meeting the benchmark? Are ALL subgroups making growth? Have we set ambitious goals for the next quarter?

This is an important process that aids schools in reducing the racial equity gap and the good news is that the gap is shrinking! Through this process, the gap has been decreasing each year for the past several years!

For example, across the district the achievement gap between our White and Latino students was reduced by 13% in reading and 25% in math, with scores increasing for both subgroups of students (for example, White students' scores increased from 90% to 92% in reading, while Latino students' scores increased from 66% to 71%.)

See the EBIS section for data on the racial achievement gap.

Importantly for this year, ODE has directed elementary and middle schools to obtain permission from parents to assess students who have already met the standard on OAKS. This means once a student has "met," they will not be retested to measure growth or try for "exceeds," if parents disapprove.

DIBELS:

All elementary schools efficiently screen all students three times each year in reading with the DIBELS assessment both to identify students at-risk for reading difficulties and to make sure at least 80% of students are being successful in our core literacy program. Since beginning to use DIBELS in 2004 to identify at-risk students and monitor their progress in reading, our teachers have significantly increased the percent of students meeting critical end-of-2nd grade reading benchmarks from 63% to 73%.

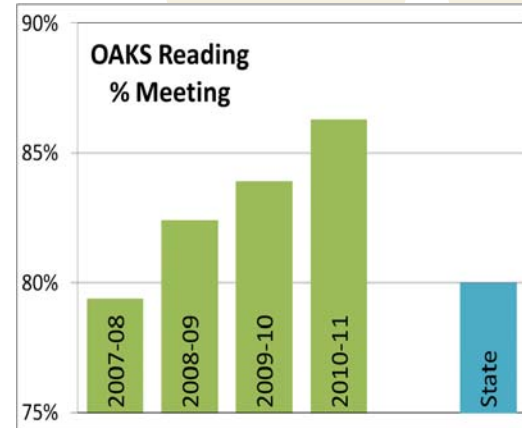
The Winter DIBELS benchmark testing in elementary schools will begin January 9th and run through the 24th. As always, the district DIBELS team will be making the rounds to test at one school each day. We are continuing to collect data on the usefulness of the DAZE measure as a part of school-wide screening at three pilot schools: Templeton, Metzger and Durham. This will inform a decision on whether to adopt DAZE throughout the district. In the meantime, teachers can still use the DAZE for progress monitoring students already identified for interventions.

Math Fluency:

This year, at the request of teachers who are trainers of the Math Expressions curriculum, short timed tests of math fluency have been developed and administered to both measure student proficiency on grade-level fluency standards and to identify students who may be at-risk for difficulties in math for the EBIS process.

The third administration of the math fluency measures will be taking place in elementary schools at the same time as the January DIBELS testing; this is timed to inform both the EBIS process and second quarter report cards. This assessment will replace the one-minute addition / subtraction probe for 3rd grade with a one-minute multiplication test, matching the progression of the state standards and the Math Expressions curriculum. District percentiles will be published once the data has been collected and recorded in the Intervention Planning and Assessment System (IPAS).

Reading Performance Trends



MAZE:

Like elementary schools and DIBELS, all middle schools efficiently screen all students three times each year in reading with the MAZE -CBM assessment both to identify students at-risk for reading difficulties and to make sure at least 80% of students are being successful in our core literacy program. The MAZE reading comprehension testing window is between January 9th and the 24th for grades 6-8. We will continue to use the district benchmarks established around the predictability of success on OAKS using the old OAKS benchmarks. When we have an entire year's worth of data with the new OAKS benchmarks we will adjust the district's MAZE benchmarks accordingly so that we are ensuring students are on target for meeting high school graduation requirements. The MAZE is also used in middle and high school reading intervention classes to monitor student progress towards meeting the essential skills requirements in reading needed to obtain a standard diploma. Talk to your school's Instructional Coordinator to find out more about MAZE testing and the EBIS process.

*See the
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racial achievement gap.*