

7600: Participation in State Assessments

Context

The Exeter-West Greenwich School Committee is charged with the entire care, control, and management of all public school interests of the respective town(s) and maintains, by statute (R.I.G.L. 16-2-9), the following powers and duties:

- To identify educational needs in the community;
- To develop education policies to meet the needs of the community; and
- To provide for and assure the implementation of federal and state laws, the regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, and of local school policies, programs, and directives.

The Rhode Island Board of Education establishes Basic Education Program (BEP) Regulations pursuant to its delegated statutory authority to determine standards for the Rhode Island public education system and the maintenance of local appropriation to support its implementation. Further, the BEP establishes the requirement that the Local Education Agency (Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District) must “ensure that its students are provided with a comprehensive program of study that is guaranteed and viable in each content area from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 so that its students are prepared for post-secondary education or productive employment. Each curriculum shall be developed to meet or exceed state content standards that have been adopted by the Board of Regents.” Additionally, the Local Education Agency “shall ensure that its schools are compliant with the BEP, as well as all other requirements related to student achievement as measured by state and local assessments.” R.I.G.L. 16-22-9 states that “the commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall establish a program for uniform achievement testing of pupils in elementary and secondary schools in the state. Pupils attending public schools shall be administered tests under the supervision of the state department of elementary and secondary education in accordance with the program.”

In addition, the BEP outlines the functions of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, to include:

- Ensuring quality assurance and quality control of (the district’s) efforts through an effective system of indicators, data collection, analysis, and public reporting.

The BEP further states, “In carrying out its leadership role, RIDE has a responsibility to exercise its authority under state and federal law to intervene in LEAs and schools that are not closing student achievement gaps, are not continuously improving, or are not reaching state performance standards.”

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the Rhode Island accountability system will be used to classify schools as Commended, Leading, In Good Standing (with or without alerts), Focus, or Priority. The metrics used to determine said classifications include all of the following:

- Proficiency rates in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math as measured by approved state testing results;
- Gap closing in ELA and Math among subgroups as measured by approved state testing results;
- Performance growth in ELA and Math as measured by approved state testing results (Elementary and Middle Schools only); and
- High school graduation rates

RIDE will also continue to calculate state testing participation rates for each school. Schools not reaching the 95% participation rate will have an alert and not be eligible for Commended or Leading status. Students who do not test, for any reason other than a state-approved medical waiver, will count against participation rates.

Finally, R.I.G.L. 16-5-30 grants the commissioner of elementary and secondary education the statutory right to “order the general treasurer to withhold the payment of any portion of the public money that has been or may be apportioned to the city or town for violation or neglect of law or for violation or neglect of rules and regulations in pursuance of law by any city or town or city or town officer or school committee.”

Policy Proclamation

The school committee acknowledges the Common Core State Standards (or successor standards, as these may change from time to time) as the current approved standards of the Board of Education, and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (or a successor assessment system, as this may change from time to time) as the current approved state assessment system. Further, the school committee will not condone activities that violate federal law, state law or the Regulations of the Board of Education, thereby jeopardizing the good standing of the Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District, whether it is financial or performance-related. Therefore, the school committee directs the superintendent to develop and implement curricula that is aligned to the approved standards of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Furthermore, the school committee directs the superintendent to adhere to the state-approved assessment system for all students except those exempted by a state-approved medical waiver. The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District shall offer no provision for opting out of these requirements.

Responsibilities

Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District administration shall be responsible for:

- Monitoring curriculum and assessment implementation and advocating for necessary changes to the system at the state level;
- Developing assessment schedules to minimize impact on teaching and learning;
- Analyzing and securing appropriate instructional resources necessary to implement the approved curriculum and assessment requirements;
- Communicating regularly with practitioners to identify and provide necessary training and professional development to implement the approved curriculum and assessment requirements;
- Communicating accurate and unbiased information with parents and community members regarding the approved curriculum and assessment requirements, including those outlined in this policy; and
- Analyzing state assessment results to inform instructional, curricular, and program decisions for the district, school, grade-level, classroom and/or individual students.

Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District teachers and staff shall be responsible for:

- Adhering to state and district requirements for curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- Communicating accurate and unbiased information with parents and community members regarding the approved curriculum and assessment requirements, including those outlined in this policy;

- Encouraging students to put forth best effort during all instructional and assessment activities, including the state assessment program;
- Participating actively in all training and professional development opportunities provided by the district; and
- Analyzing classroom and state assessment results to inform instructional decisions for the grade-level, classroom and/or individual students.

Parents shall be responsible for:

- Adhering to state and district requirements for curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- Encouraging their children to put forth best effort during all instructional and assessment activities, including the state assessment program; and
- Communicating openly with district and school personnel to address any questions or recommendations to improve curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.

Students shall be responsible for:

- Putting forth best effort during all instructional and assessment activities, including the state assessment program.

Dissemination

This policy shall be disseminated to all Metcalf, Junior High School and Senior High School families upon adoption of the school committee. This policy shall be posted in school handbooks and on the district web site, and shared electronically with all district staff.

Effective Date

This policy shall become effective on the date adopted by the school committee.

First Reading: July 15, 2015

Adoption: August 12, 2015