

Standards, Assessment and Accountability Discussions
State Board of Education – Policy Committee
Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA) Belief Statements
August 11, 2009 – Full Board Discussion – Draft

The Nebraska State Board of Education believes:

1. The primary purpose of standards, assessment, and accountability is to improve learning for all students.
2. The engagement, professionalism, and expertise of administrators and teachers are critical to building standards, assessment, and accountability systems.
3. Standards define what all students should know and be able to do at specified grade levels as a result of instruction.
4. Standards provide equity by defining the knowledge and skills that all students will master.
5. Standards represent both content mastery and the application of higher order thinking skills*. Assessments measure both content mastery and the application of these skills.
6. Student mastery of the state standards forms the basis for determining progress in student achievement.
7. The results of multiple assessment sources (national, state, and classroom-based) should be used to measure student achievement and be used as an integral part of the instructional process.
8. Districts will conduct an annual analysis of student achievement and the district process for continuous improvement.
9. An annual report of student achievement should be shared in a collaborative conversation with parents, community, and all stakeholders with accurate, complete, and easily understandable explanations and interpretation of results.
10. Districts will be involved in a continuous improvement process to improve learning for all students.
11. The continuous improvement process should include professional development for all staff members, administrators, and school board members that is focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and accountability.
12. Districts will be accountable for improving student learning.
13. A state comprehensive accountability system will include student performance information and school and community-based indicators that directly support and impact student performance.
14. Accountability systems will be improved and refined over time.

* Higher order thinking skills include but are not limited to problem solving, and accessing, analyzing, synthesizing, and communicating information.

Additional Notes: Standards are numbered for purposes of discussion and are not prioritized. The intended audience for these belief statements includes the State Board, the Department of Education, School Districts, and the public.

Nebraska Performance Accountability System [NePAS]

DRAFT-Updated August 2012

The following narrative provides extended explanation for the Nebraska Performance Accountability System (NePAS) as of August 2012.

Nebraska Achievement Performance System [NePAS] by Building

For each **building** (see definition below) in a district, the State of the Schools Report [SOSR] will display the calculations of scale scores for all NeSA performance indicators for each applicable grade within the building, to include status, growth, and improvement. Participation and graduation rate will be calculated as percentage. No rankings will be assigned at the building level.

“**Building**” will be defined as the physical configuration for each schoolhouse within each school district. For example a district **may** have the following “building” configuration:

Elementary Building	Grades K-6
Middle School Building	Grades 7-8
High School Building	Grades 9-12

NePAS by **building** will include the following NeSA Performance Indicators:

	Elementary Grades by Building Middle Grades by Building	Reporting Measures by Grade	State
Status	NeSA Reading	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Science	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Writing	Average Scale Score	Yes
Improvement	NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Science	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes

	NeSA Writing	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
Growth	NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
Participation	NeSA Reading	Percent	Yes
	NeSA Math	Percent	Yes
	NeSA Science	Percent	Yes
	NeSA Writing	Percent	Yes

	High School Grades by Building	Reporting Measures	State	Enrollment
Status	Average NeSA Reading	Average Scale Score	Yes	Grades 9-12
	Average NeSA Math	Average Scale Score	Yes	
	Average NeSA Science	Average Scale Score	Yes	
	Average NeSA Writing	Average Scale Score	Yes	
Improvement	Average NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes	
	Average NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes	
	Average NeSA Science	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes	
	Average NeSA Writing	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes	
Graduation Rate	4-Year	Percent	Yes	
	6-Year	Percent (Available 2013)	Yes	
Participation	NeSA Reading	Percent	Yes	
	NeSA Math	Percent	Yes	
	NeSA Science	Percent	Yes	
	NeSA Writing	Percent	Yes	

Nebraska Achievement Performance System [NePAS] by NePAS School and School District

For each school district and NePAS **school** (as defined below) within a district, the State of the Schools Report [SOSR] will display the calculations of scale scores for all NeSA performance indicators to include status, growth, and improvement. Grades 3 and 11 will not include growth. Graduation rate will be calculated as a percentage and will include a display of school district enrollment for grades 9-12. Participation will be indicated as Met or Not Met. Except for participation, each indicator for the district and each NePAS **school** within the district will receive a state ranking.

“**NePAS School**” will be defined as:

NePAS Elementary School	Grades 3-5
NePAS Middle School	Grades 6-8
NePAS High School	Grades 9-12

NePAS by **NePAS school** will include the following NeSA Performance Indicators:

NePAS Elementary School Grades 3-5 NePAS Middle School Grades 6-8		Reporting Measures	Ranked
Status	NeSA Reading	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Science	Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Writing	Average Scale Score	Yes
Improvement	NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Science	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Writing	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
Growth	NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
	NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes
Participation	NeSA Reading	Met/Not Met	No
	NeSA Math	Met/Not Met	No
	NeSA Science	Met/Not Met	No
	NeSA Writing	Met/Not Met	No

NePAS High School Grades 9-12		Reporting Measures	Ranked	Enrollment	
Status	Average NeSA Reading	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Math	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Science	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Writing	Average Scale Score	Yes		
Improvement	Average NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Science	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Writing	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
Graduation Rate	4-Year	Percent	Yes		Grades 9-12
	6-Year (Available 2013)	Percent	Yes		
Participation	NeSA Reading	Met/Not Met	No		
	NeSA Math	Met/Not Met	No		
	NeSA Science	Met/Not Met	No		
	NeSA Writing	Met/Not Met	No		

School District		Reporting Measures	Ranked	Enrollment	
Status	Average NeSA Reading	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Math	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Science	Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Writing	Average Scale Score	Yes		
Improvement	Average NeSA Reading	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Math	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Science	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
	Average NeSA Writing	Difference of Average Scale Score	Yes		
Graduation Rate	4-Year	Percent	Yes		Grades 9-12
	6-Year (Available 2013)	Percent	Yes		
Participation	NeSA Reading	Met/Not Met	No		
	NeSA Math	Met/Not Met	No		
	NeSA Science	Met/Not Met	No		

	NeSA Writing	Met/Not Met	No	
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Definitions of Calculations

Ranking will be calculated such that the highest achieving school district receives the rank of 1. A separate rank will be calculated for each indicator with no overall rank calculated for a school district.

Additionally, tied scores within each indicator will be displayed with the same rank.

Example: If fifty school districts have a 99% graduation rate, each of the school districts will receive a rank of #1 and the district with the next lower percent will be ranked as #51.

Status is the average of the scale scores in four separate content areas: reading, mathematics, writing and science for a grade or school. Scores for all students tested in the grade range for the current year are included. Status can be thought of as a "snapshot" of the state's, district's, and building's current achievement.

Improvement (Cross-Sectional) will be calculated based on the difference between the average NeSA scale score for the current year and average scale score for the previous year in a grade. These are averages of different students each year. The average scale score is calculated as the mean of all scores from students tested in that year. Improvement is based on the performance of all students in the grades that are tested each year. The two groups of students being compared will be different because of the normal progression of students through the grades. For example, this year's fifth graders will be compared to last year's fifth graders and those fifth graders from last year will not be included in the current year's average because they have moved to the sixth grade.

Growth (Cohort) will be calculated in reading and mathematics by subtracting each student's scale score for the previous year from the current year scale score. Growth is based on tracking the scores of the same students from one year to the next. Only students who were tested in both years in the same school district will be included in the calculation, so if students move from one school district to another, they are not included in the calculations. For example, this year's fifth graders will be compared with last year's fourth graders. Note that the same scale score range is used at each grade level. Therefore a student who earns the same scale score two years in a row can be said to have achieved one year's growth. In other words, a student with a difference in scale score of zero has achieved the growth expected for a single year. Growth scores are not applicable to third grade or high school.

Participation will be calculated as percentage of students enrolled at a school in grades that are tested who take the NeSA assessment. The target rate has been set at 95% and most schools test 99-100% of students. Participants will be shown as met or not met in NePAS schools and school districts.

Graduation Rate is calculated by following the students enrolled in grade 9 and calculating the percentage who have graduated after four and six years. The method to be used is the cohort four-year graduation rate defined by the US Department of Education. As data become available in 2013, the 6-year rate will be calculated as a two-year extension using the same method.

Business Rules that define the details of calculating all indicators will be taken from existing reports, e.g. State of the Schools or AYP, as appropriate, and include masking of groups with fewer than 10 to prevent issuance of personally identifiable information.