



Board Action Required ☒

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To: CISD Board of Trustees
From: Todd Kettler
Date: April 21, 2011
Re: Updates to Kindergarten Acceleration

Purpose

We are requesting the Board to approved updates/changes to the procedure for how the District conducts Kindergarten Acceleration.

Board Policy

- EHDC (Legal) states:

The District shall develop procedures for kindergarten acceleration that are approved by the Board.

- EHDC (Local) states:

The Board shall approve procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee to allow a child who is five years old at the beginning of the school year to be assigned initially to grade 1 rather than kindergarten. Criteria for acceleration may include:

1. Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel.
2. Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.
3. Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal and Superintendent or designee.

Background

- These policies are not new, though the language was slightly updated with Update 89.
- The district has been conducting Kindergarten Acceleration procedures each year in the past.
 - Testing occurs during the summer, once in June and once in July.
 - All students have an opportunity to register for the kindergarten acceleration when they register for kindergarten at their home campus.

Reasons for Update

- The current procedures for Kindergarten Acceleration have not been reviewed or revised in at least seven years.
- The measurements used to determine if a student moves to 1st grade do not reflect the current district standards for Kindergarten as expressed in the Standards Based Report Card.
- The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills have been updated since the development of the current Kindergarten Acceleration procedures.

Process Used for Proposed Revisions

- Update 89 updates presented an opportunity for the curriculum staff to review processes and procedures.
- In January, Todd Kettler presented the Kindergarten Acceleration procedures to the Directors of Math and Language arts (those are the two areas tested in the process). Both stated that the process was dated and needed review.
- Todd Kettler appointed Chantel Kastrounis, assistant principal at Cottonwood Creek Elementary, to assemble a committee to review and recommend potential recommendations.
 - 16 Educators on the Committee
 - 7 Kindergarten teachers
 - 5 First grade teachers
 - 3 Administrators
 - 1 Counselor
 - All elementary campuses were represented with at least one person on the committee.
- The committee had three meetings at which the process was reviewed. The committee unanimously agreed to the need for updates and proposed the updates presented here.

Benefits of Approving the Changes

- Better alignment between the assessment and what we teach in kindergarten.
- Improved placement of students because the assessment is more valid when compared to standards.
- Improves district communication with parents when explaining what is being measured on the assessment and its relationship to the students' readiness for 1st grade.
- Teachers and administrators all agreed on the need for change and support the improvement in this annual process.
- There are no costs associated with the changes.

Summary of the Changes Proposed

- What will not change:
 - Frequency of testing: Still offered twice per year
 - Timeframe of testing: Still offered during summer, once in June and once in July
 - Registration process: Still will be done when parents register for kindergarten at their home campus; however, we may add an online registration option to supplement the paper option to be implemented for 2012.
 - Availability: Still open to any student who meets the age requirements to enter kindergarten.
 - Administration of the Assessments: Still administered by CISD teachers, typically those who teach kindergarten or first grade.
- Changes:
 - We are replacing the previous reading and writing tasks with new language arts tasks to reflect reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These new tasks are aligned with what we teach during kindergarten.
 - We are replacing the previous math tasks with new math tasks to reflect what we teach during kindergarten.
 - The new tasks for both math and language arts reflect the standards used on the kindergarten report card.
 - The previous task outcomes were dichotomous. Students either met the standard or did not. Those dichotomous delineations are being replaced by a 4-

level rubric which is reflective of the categories on the standards based report card:

- 4: Exceeds the expectation for the standard
 - 3: Meets the expectations for the standard
 - 2: Approaching the expectations for the standard
 - 1: Developing the prerequisites for the standard
- Addition of an opportunity for the teachers to rate the student's observed social and emotional development during the process.

Attached

Find a copy of the current kindergarten acceleration assessment matrix followed by a copy of the proposed new assessment matrix.