



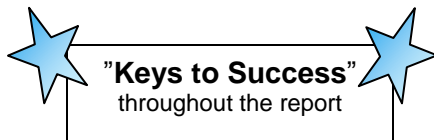
**Hermantown Community Schools**  
2014-15 Annual Report  
Including the  
World's Best Workforce Report

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## Introduction

Hermantown Community Schools have, for a long period of time, enjoyed a highly visible and popular standing in our region. Our students do well in state-wide assessments, are often accepted to prestigious universities and technical colleges, and are well-prepared to enter an ever changing work environment. There are three pillars upon which our educational structure is built. They are as follows: community centric, enhanced learning opportunities through facility design and use, and a systemic culture of care. Each element frames the expectation for our residents, faculty, administration and students, to work diligently toward the success of all.

As required by the State of Minnesota, information found in this report highlights the results of academic initiatives and programs. It includes details of the district's efforts to continuously improve instruction and learning for ALL students. Information includes:



Demographic overview  
Assessment  
Curriculum Review  
Staff Development  
World's Best Workforce  
Local Literacy Plan

### *District Advisory Council*

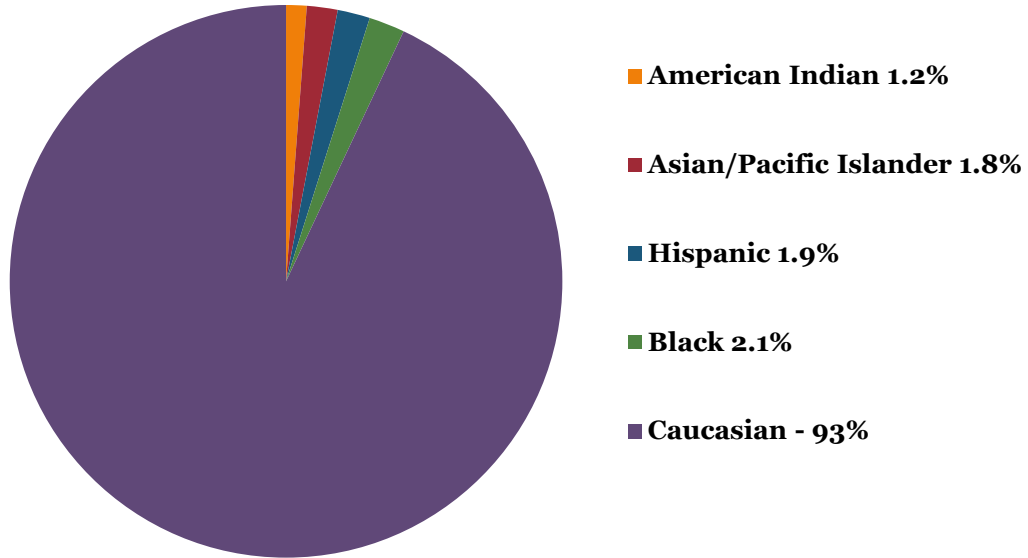
The Hermantown Community Schools have come to rely on school/community collaborations to provide valuable input and insight for our decision-making process. The District Advisory Council provides feedback and input resulting in recommendations to the School Board regarding curriculum review and selection as well as some reports that are submitted to the MN Department of Education. Current membership consists of:

Gretchen Appelwick, Teacher  
Chris Brown, Parent  
Maranda DeSanto, Parent  
Janelle Htnako, Parent  
Renée Klinkner, Curriculum & Instruction  
Cynthia Nelson, Teacher  
Leo Plewa, Community Member  
Scott Schulz, Parent  
Deanne Zelen, Teacher

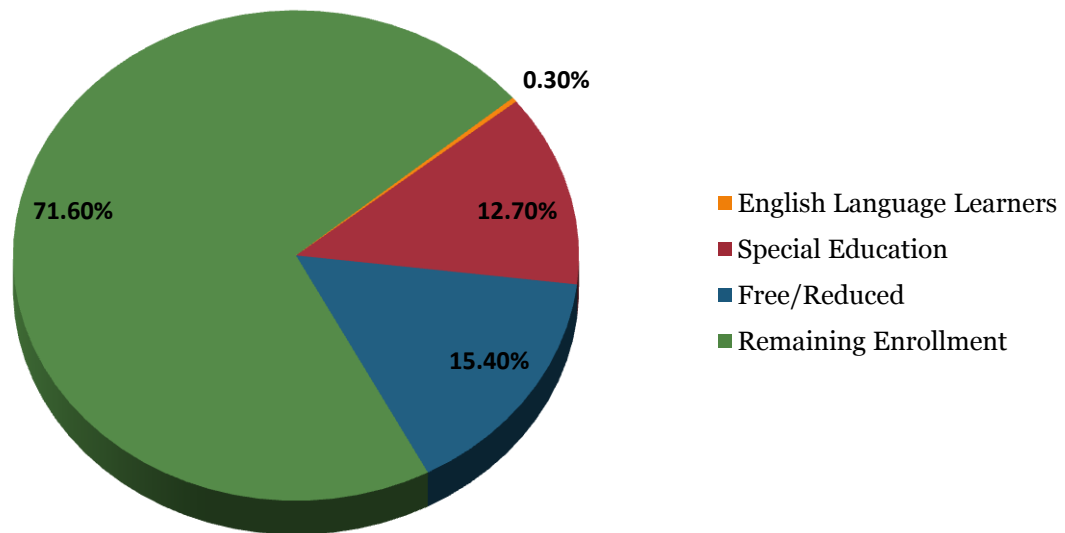
John Bauman, Parent  
Heather Brown, Parent  
Val Gow, Parent  
Kerry Juntunen, Superintendent  
Melanie Musick, Parent  
Blaine Peterson, Parent/School Board  
Aaron Salmela, Parent/School Board  
Jill Somers, Parent

***We need your help. We are inviting members of our school community*** who have an interest and/or knowledge of curriculum and educational programs to become members of our Curriculum Advisory Committee. The 2015-2016 committee will have input regarding the monitoring and implementation of the curriculum review cycle and process. Anyone interested in becoming a member is encouraged to contact Renée Klinkner, Director of Curriculum and Instruction at 218.729.9313 x 6009 or by e-mail: [klinknerr@isd700.org](mailto:klinknerr@isd700.org) or by simply stopping by the district's administrative building at 4307 Ugstad Road, Hermantown, MN

## 2014-15 Demographics of enrollment



## Special Populations



## Assessment

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act is federal legislation that is the revision of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB required states to develop statewide tests for students in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school. Each state was allowed to develop their own academic standards, tests of those standards and determine indicators of proficiency. Proficiency refers to making satisfactory academic progress. These assessments are intended to check the educational system (the school district) to ensure that ALL students, of all subgroups, are making adequate yearly progress and the closure of the achievement gap.

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments meet the requirements of NCLB legislation and are administered each spring as follows:

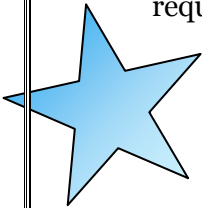
Reading : 3rd – 8th graders and 10th graders

Science: 5th and 8th graders

Math: 3rd – 8th graders and 11th graders

In the spring of 2015, the State of MN also required all 11th graders to take the ACT.

In 2009, due to the varying degrees of proficiency and depth of academic content from state to state, the National Governors Association began the Common Core State Standards Initiative. Minnesota is one of 42 states that have adopted the Common Core Standards for Language Arts. All curricula taught in Minnesota public schools is driven by the academic standards adopted by the State of Minnesota. Reporting assessment results and the curriculum review process is a required piece of MN legislation.



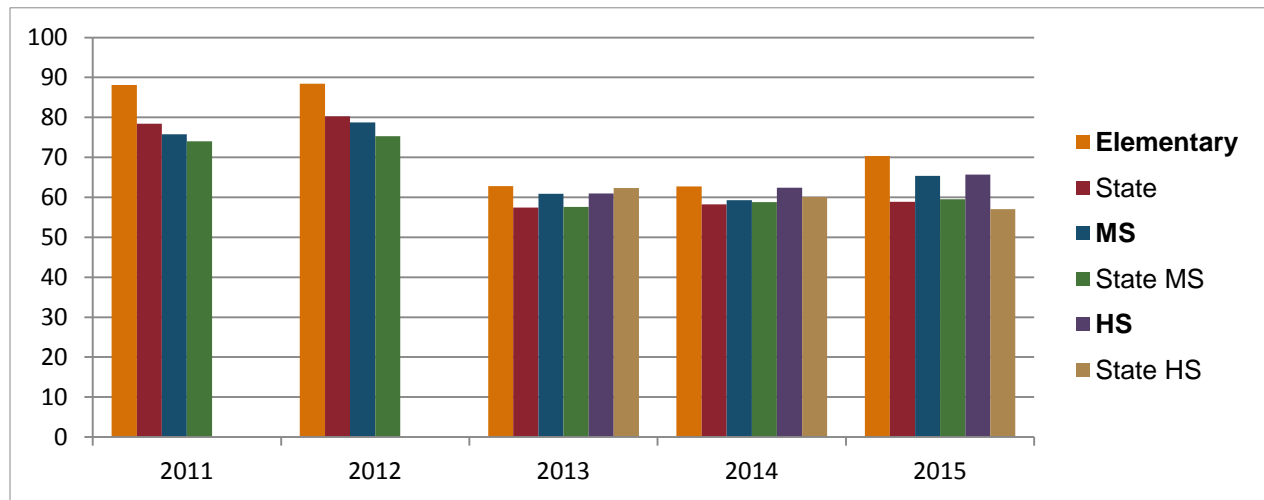
- ✓ At the district level, the percentage of students demonstrating Math proficiency has ***steadily increased 11 %*** since 2011.
- ✓ At the district level, 61% of students demonstrate proficiency in Science, which is ***well above the state average*** of 53.4%.
- ✓ Reading proficiency ***improved 5.7%*** from 60.3% in 2014 to 66% in 2015, and again, well above the state average of 59.5%

*Though the State academic standards and assessments continue to be changed and updated, students of Hermantown Community Schools continue to score above the state average.*

**Research reports that the factors contributing to high achievement include:**

- **Teacher and principal quality**
- **Curriculum aligned with state and national standards**
  - **Great parent and community support**
  - **High expectations**

## Percentage of students earning MCA proficiency- Reading



	Hermantown Elementary	State	Hermantown MS	State	Hermantown HS	State
2011	88.1	78.4	75.8	74	NA	NA
2012	88.4	80.3	78.7	75.3	NA	NA
2013*	62.8	57.4	60.9	57.6	61	62.3
2014	62.7	58.2	59.3	58.8	62.4	60.1
2015	70.3	58.9	65.4	59.5	65.7	57

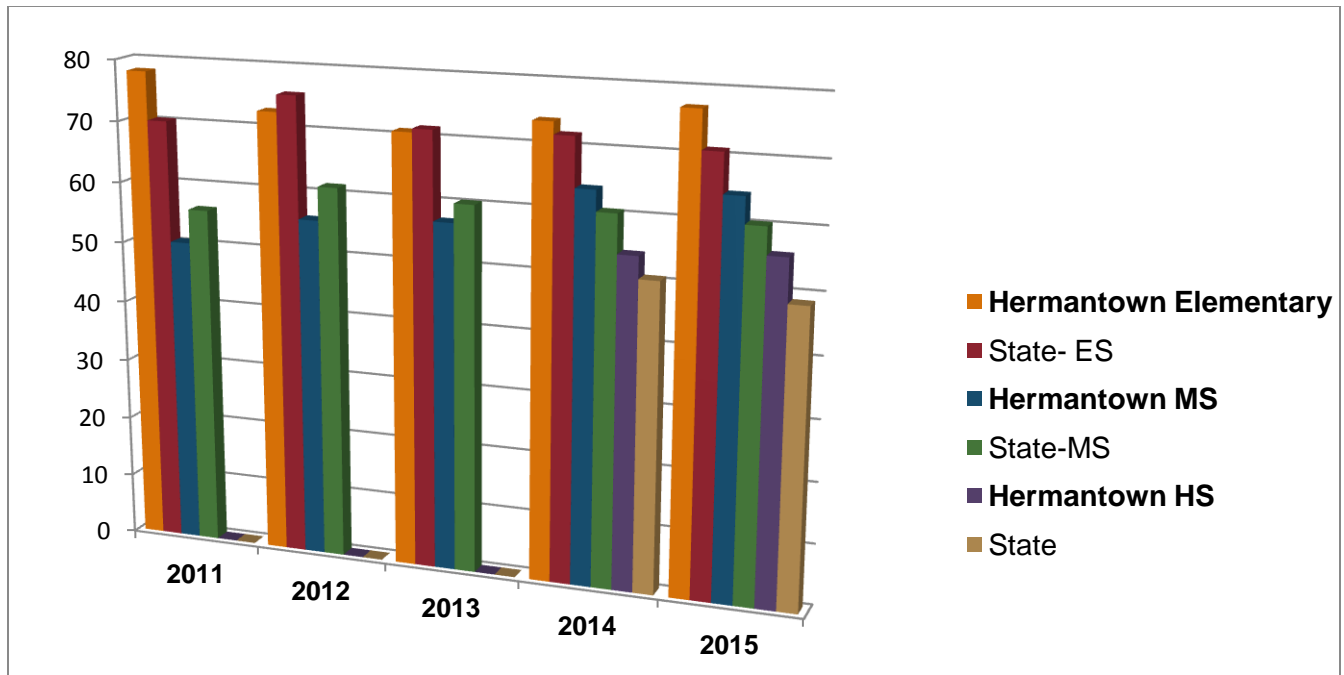
### **Key Indicator of Success\***

- ✓ Across the district, the percentage of students achieving Reading proficiency **increased 5.7%** from 2014-15 and is **6.5% above the State average.**
- ✓ Percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students meeting proficiency increased 3.2% from 2014 and 6.2% since 2013.



*\*Drop in scores within the district and across the State were experienced due to changes in the MN Comprehensive Assessment and the increased rigor of the test*

### Percentage of students earning MCA proficiency- Math



	Hermantown Elementary	State	Hermantown MS	State	Hermantown HS	State
<b>2011</b>	78.1	70.2	50.4	56	NA	NA
<b>2012</b>	72.8	75.6	55.8	61.3	NA	NA
<b>2013</b>	70.9	71.5	57.1	60.2	NA	NA
<b>2014</b>	73.9	71.9	63.9	60.5	54.2	50.6
<b>2015</b>	77.1	70.9	64.5	60.2	55.8	48.7

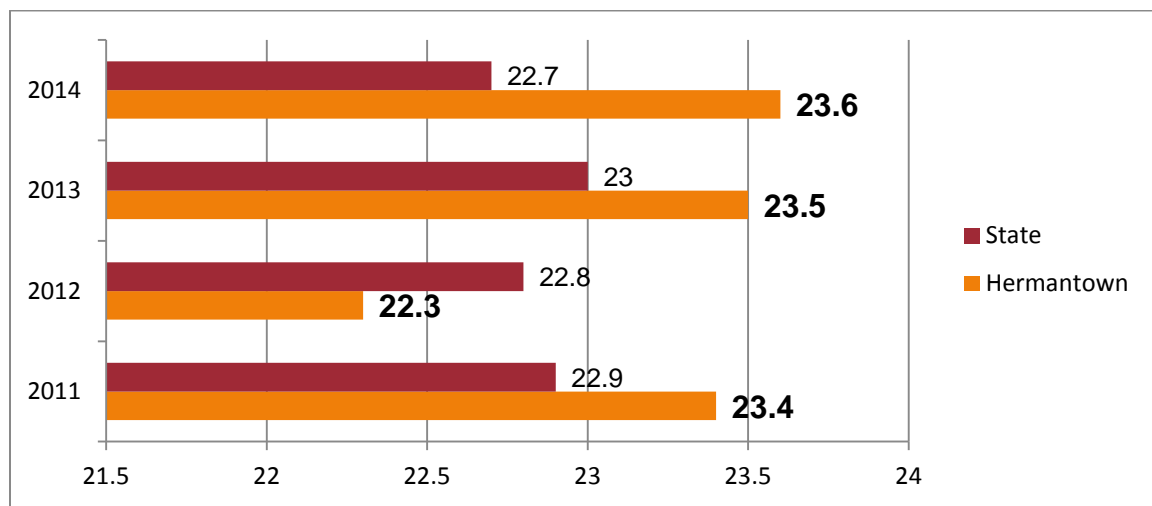


### **Key Indicator of Success**

Across the district, the percentage of students achieving Math proficiency increased 4.6 percent for the past two years and **11% since 2011**.

For 3 consecutive years, the percentage of students that Exceed Standards increased in math for grades 4, 6, 7 & 8

### ACT Composite Score Trend

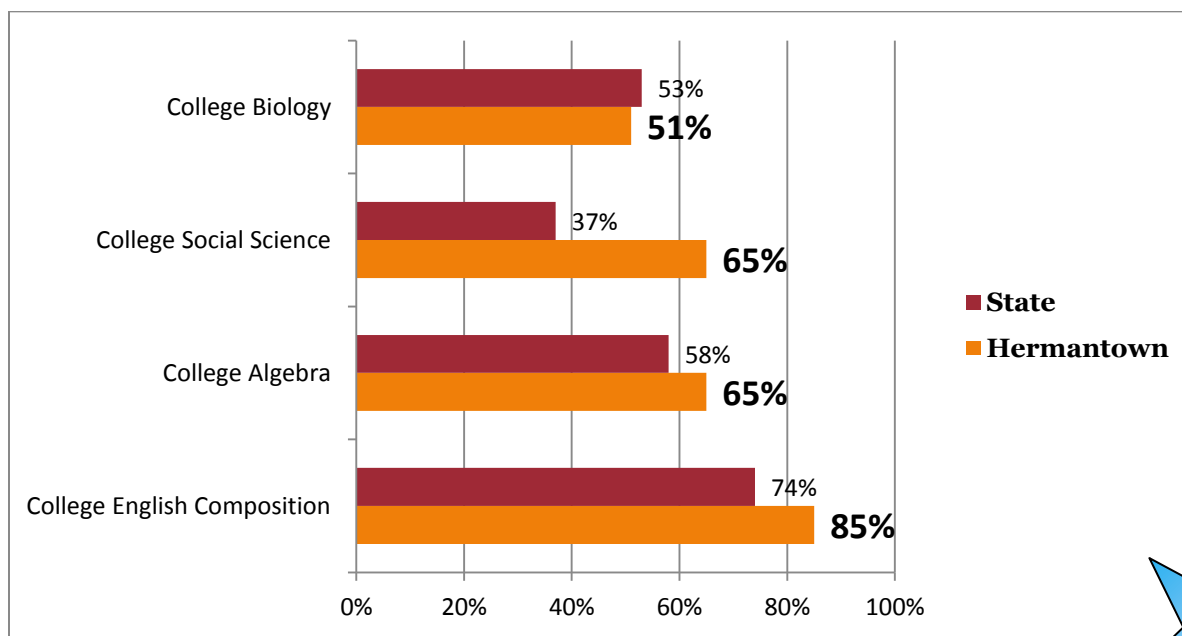


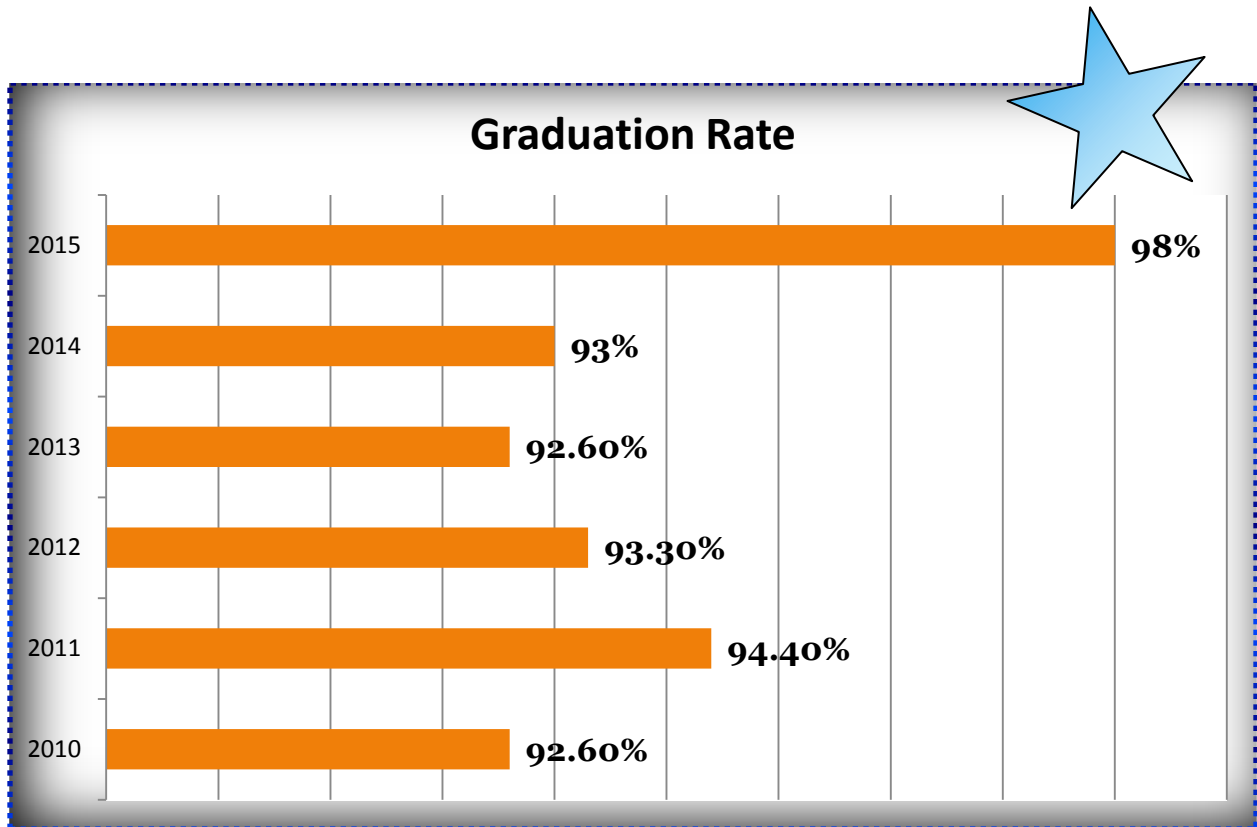
### **Key Indicator of Success**

The average composite score of the Hermantown students that took the ACT has been above the state average for three out of the four past years.

### **Percentage of Students Ready for College-Level Coursework**

As reported by ACT

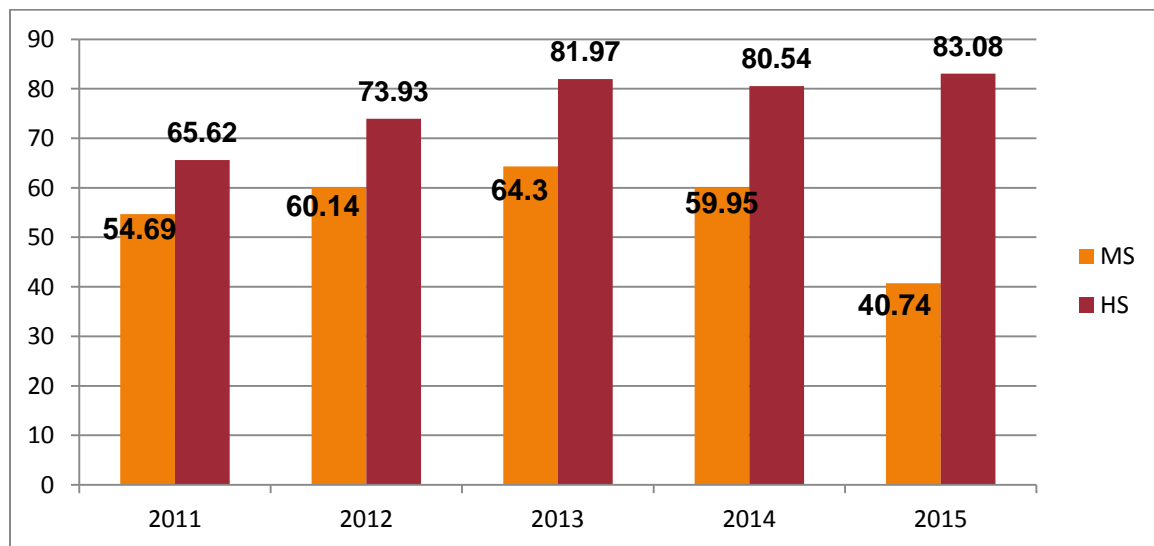




### MMR

The Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR) was developed by the Minnesota Department of Education as a system for school recognition, accountability and support. The MMR measures proficiency, student growth, achievement gap reduction and graduation rates. A *Focus Rating* is generated by combining the proficiency and growth of the seven subgroups that define the achievement gap: Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Free/Reduced Lunch, Special Education and English Language Learners

### Focus Rating Score:





## Curriculum Review

Curriculum is school adopted programs and written plans for providing students with learning experiences that lead to mastery of knowledge and skills needed for career and college readiness. Data, such as enrollment trends, assessment scores and related management data, in addition to updated academic standards, career projections and postsecondary requirements all play a role in the continuous cycle of curriculum review. Statute requires a Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) to ensure active community participating in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum. Through the curriculum review process a conduit of communication is developed between residents, parents and school. Whenever possible, CAC will reflect the diversity of the district and students PreK – 12, and whenever possible, residents and parents shall comprise at least two thirds of the advisory committee membership. The review cycle is a six year cycle that includes:

### **Year One – Research and Self-Study – 2014-15: *Media/Business Ed/Computer Ed***

Analyze the results of tests, surveys and other data

- Review state standards
- Review graduation requirements
- Research current trends and issues that affect the subject area
- Investigate best practices that relate to the subject area
- Possibly conduct visits to other school districts to observe exemplary programs
- Identify strengths of the current program and areas for improvement.

### **Year Two – Program Design – 2014-15: *Science/Guidance***

- Develop or review scope and sequence
- Analyze current curricular situation and conduct a needs assessment
- Communicate pre K-12 strengths and areas of need to all stakeholders
- Provide parent and community information on website and/or through brochures
- Develop/review grade level curriculum maps
- Evaluate and recommend resources
- Discuss and develop Pre K-12 staff development plan

### **Year Three – Instructional Material Review & Selection - 2014-15: *Math/Ind.Tech***

- Conduct school visits to observe use of curriculum considered for adoption
- Review instructional materials and select appropriate materials for purchase
- Work on additional improvement plan items
- What do teachers need to implement the new curriculum?
- Create a work plan that provides the in-service and meeting time needed

### **Year Four – Implementation – 2014-15: *Music/FACS/World Lang***

Provide staff development opportunities to support staff in meeting all students' needs, addressing:

- Strategies to accelerate and remediate students
- Issues relating to students with special needs
- Continue implementation of curriculum, incorporating new materials
- Incorporate key instructional strategies and delivery systems that support student learning
- Continue to work on improvement plan items

- Adjust plan and implementation, as necessary

**Year Five – In-service & Program Review –2014-15: *Language Arts/Art.***

- Set measurable achievement goals
- Possibly attend conferences
- Work with the curriculum and adjust plans and implementation, as necessary
- Gather feedback from teachers on progress and needs regarding new curriculum implementation
- How are students responding to new curriculum?

**Year Six – Evaluation – 2014-15: *Social Studies/PE/Health***

- Maintain frequent communication with subject representatives/department chairs
- Make recommendations for continuous improvement

**2014-15 Staff Development Goals and Outcomes**

**A Plan for Professional Development to Support and Increase Student Achievement**

The ultimate goal of staff development is to increase student achievement. Research tells us that students will benefit when we make sure teachers consistently have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach successfully. The school experience for staff has to be as much about learning as it is about teaching. Staff must have time to learn, plan lessons, critique student work and support improvement as members of learning teams. Schools must be centered on learning communities where staff members establish common goals for student success. While the plan is a work in progress, we believe that it contains the elements to support increased student achievement and staff success. The foundation for this plan has been the HISD 700 School Board Goals, the Legislative Mandated Staff Development Goals and the National Standards for Staff Development.

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Hermantown Staff Development Committee is to support the success of all learners by promoting consistent application of effective research-based staff development and to facilitate collaboration in order to increase student achievement.

**District Goals:**

1. Explore, adapt and support technology innovations and initiatives in the learning environment in order to manage data, engage learners and increase student achievement.
2. Identify, implement and support a high-quality, sustainable, evidence based social and emotional culture that is integrated into all aspects of schooling and fosters respect and safety in which all individuals are valued.
3. Maintain a training model that moves all employees to higher levels of job performance, job satisfaction and systematic team unity and direction.
4. Support a cohesive, comprehensive and enriching curriculum training that adheres with the curriculum cycle and utilizes E-12 curriculum content teams to prepare students for increased achievement on district and state standards.

5. Utilizing data from summative and formative assessments and implement teaching strategies that are based on research and best practice to strengthen student achievement.

***\*All goals met***

**Elementary School Goals:**

1. To continue to support opportunities for training and staff collaboration in the areas of math and language arts.
2. To continue to support training and professional development of all elementary staff in the integration of technology throughout the curriculum.
3. To continue to support training and professional development of all elementary staff in the use of AimsWEB and Response to Intervention
4. To continue to support the H.A.W.K.S. school wide behavior plan as measured by the involvement of all students and staff.
5. To continue to support training for teacher evaluation.

***\*All goals met***

**Middle School Goals:**

1. Increase communication and meeting time between special education and general education teacher in order to better meet IEP goals through appropriate accommodations.
2. Provide training opportunities and support all staff in the implementation of technology and standards-based curricula in the classroom.
3. Understand that every teacher is a teacher of reading and establish specific reading goals for teachers in all subject areas to implement.
4. Work to improve curriculum and create a scope and sequence for all content areas including detailed accounts of what is taught at each grade level and what specific technology is being taught and introduced at each grade level.
5. Establish a consistent policy for grades 6-8 regarding homework completion and whether or not students are able to attend field trips if homework is not completed.
6. Train and inform staff on new staff evaluation procedures and requirements.

***\*All goals met***

**High School Goals:**

1. Provide staff with opportunities to collaborate, research, analyze and implement resources, including technology and data, to help students develop skills for success in all academic and extra-curricular areas of learning.
2. Provide training opportunities germane to teaching assignments that support updated best practices in any of the following areas to improve student achievement: curriculum, assessment and/or alignment with state standards.
3. Utilize data from summative and formative assessments and implement teaching strategies that are based on research and best practice to strengthen student achievement and to meet district goals.
4. Support social/emotional learning, wellness and safe school initiatives, such as Link Crew, and provide staff opportunities to train, to organize and to effectively implement learned strategies and help maintain a positive High School environment.

***\*All goals met***

**Early Childhood Goals:**

1. Continue to provide on-going staff development and mentoring, based on needs of both staff and students.

*\*Goal met*

**Alternative Learning Program Goals:**

1. Provide training opportunities germane to teaching assignments that support updated best practices in any of the following areas to improve student achievement: curriculum, assessment, and/or alignment with State standards.

*\*Goal met*



**What is the World’s Best Workforce?**

In addition to the federal No Child Left Behind Legislation, Minnesota passed the World’s Best Workforce bill in 2013 to ensure every school district in the state is making strides to increase student performance. For Minnesota to be competitive, we must have students who are college and career ready, and poised to lead the state’s workforce. This is important for a number of reasons.

- Our population is aging
- 70% of jobs will require more than a high school diploma by 2018
- We do not have adequate number of qualified candidates to fill many good-paying jobs.
- The fastest growing segment of our future workforce is students of color, and they currently have the state’s lowest graduation rate.
- Minnesota has one of the worst black-white achievement gaps in the country.

School must develop plans and measureable goals to address five specific areas relating to future work force candidates and results must be annually reported to our community and the MN Department of Education.

**Goals and Results\***

	<b>2014-2015 Goals</b>	<b>2014-2015 Goal Results</b>
<b>All Students Ready for Kindergarten</b>	Students participating in School Readiness will meet the indicators of progress outlined in the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress Language and Literacy Development Domain as measured by the Desired Results Developmental Profile for School Readiness	The average student score for Fall of 2014 was 2.3 and increased to 3.6 by Spring of 2015.

	<b>2014-2015 Goals</b>	<b>2014-2015 Goal Results</b>
<b>All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy</b>	All 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade students will meet proficiency as measured by the Reading MCA	MCA results: 77.1% of all 3 <sup>rd</sup> graders met proficiency, an improvement of 3.2% from 2014 & improvement of 6.2% since 2013.
<b>Close the Achievement Gap(s) Among All Groups</b>	We will use data to identify the instructional needs of ALL students.	2015 MMR Average Gap Reduction Score: .0997 2015 MMR Average Gap Reduction Score: -.1887
<b>All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation</b>	Expand the <i>Career Exploration</i> unit and develop a required, semester- long Career Exploration class for 9 <sup>th</sup> graders, to be implemented 2015-16	Course was developed and included in the 2015-16 schedule for all 9 <sup>th</sup> grade students.
<b>All Students Graduate</b>	All students of senior status will meet graduation requirements.	The graduation rate for HHS grew from 93% in 2014 to 98% in 2015.

### **Identified Needs Based on Data**

#### **Students**

The District continued to focus efforts on improving reading skills K – 12. In the Elementary School, the data from AIMSweb, curriculum assessments and grade level common assessments was analyzed to identify the reading proficiency level of students. Results were communicated with parents. These assessments were also used to validate students’ instructional needs for math. The Middle School implemented this same process and also included MCA and OLPA data. The High School’s Counseling Department reviewed grades and MCAs of every student twice during the year. Students were enrolled in remedial classes for English, Math and/or Science based on that review and teacher recommendation.

#### **Teachers and Principals**

**Goal:** *To continue to support opportunities for training and staff collaboration in the areas of math and language arts.*

- Staff Development opportunities were offered to ALL certified, non-certified and administrators during Fall Workshop, Saturday Academies and Late Start/Early Release times. All Staff Development Goals were met.
- New instructional staff were mentored throughout the year.
- Staff began to implement PLCs.
- Extensive Staff development training was provided for newly implemented teacher evaluation tools and a peer review process.

## Systems, Strategies and Support Category

### Elementary

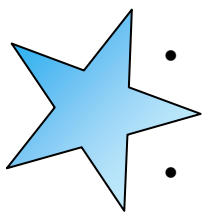
- After reviewing data, intervention teams worked with teachers and support staff in developing collaborative plans for interventions and instructional support. Interventions were implemented for six weeks and the intervention teams would meet to review student progress. If progress was made, the teacher continued the intervention. If progress did not occur, the teacher implemented a different intervention recommended by the team. The intervention teams again review student progress after six weeks.
- Reading Corp Tutors provided additional instructional support to students who were identified as being “on the bubble”, using research based literacy interventions. These students did not qualify for Title I services but were targeted reading levels. Title I services were provided in addition to reading instruction that took place in the classroom. These students received additional instruction in the classroom or in the Title I classroom, as determined by the needs of the students, number of students from the teacher’s classroom needing services, specialists schedules etc.
- Classroom teachers regularly held grade level meetings with the principal and discussion focused on reviewing data and determining the effectiveness of the core instruction and interventions.
- In grades 4 and 5, the intervention program doubled the amount of reading and math instruction.

### Middle School

- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts teacher provided additional reading instruction during zero hour or ninth period.
- Math teachers offered MASH (Math After School Help) that targeted both under-achieving students as well as those who wanted to excel in math.

### High School

- *A Career Exploration* unit was embedded in the *Computer Literacy* course taken by all 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This semester-long course incorporated technology based research skills to explore careers of their interest and build a portfolio. This unit helped students to begin to prepare and plan for their remaining years of high school to meet college and career readiness requirements for graduation.
- Teachers and Counselors review grades and MCA scores to identify students that are struggling. These students are enrolled in English, Math and/or Science Workshop classes that have an adjusted instructional pace and remedial content.
- **Ten** College In the Schools (CIS) classes were offered. Students in these classes received high school and college credit for the course and were dual enrolled in Hermantown High School and Lake Superior College or UMD. CIS courses offered included: World History, Psychology, Sociology, Anatomy/Physiology, Pre-Calculus, Introduction to Literature, Composition, Accounting I & II, and Investing in Your Financial Future.
- To meet the college entrance requirements and the cultural changes of society, World Languages courses were offered for German and Spanish.



- Students that were not finding success in the traditional classroom continued their education in the two year alternative learning program, FOCUS. This program helped students to:
  - realize their full potential
  - learn ways to be responsible for their work and actions
  - stay in school
  - re-enter the traditional classroom and graduate from high school

## **Best Practice Strategies and Action Steps**

### **Elementary**

Hermantown Elementary addressed PBIS through the incorporation of the HAWKS plan. (Hard work, Attitude counts, Work Hard, Kindness, Safe). PBIS practices are integrated into the plan to support positive behavior interventions. Boys Town practices continued to be the foundation of this program.

Literacy and math instruction and assessments in kindergarten through third grade are based on the Minnesota State Standards. Kindergarten students were given AIMSweb assessments three times during the school year. These assessments included letter naming, letter sounds, and phonemic segmentation, number identification, and quantity discrimination. Students were also assessed in comprehension, identification of high frequency words, and phonological awareness in a variety of methods including adopted curriculum materials. Correlating to these assessments, the literacy proficiency goals for every kindergarten student was to recognize upper and lowercase letters and their sounds, as well as beginning phoneme segmentation.

First grade students were given similar assessments to measure reading and math proficiency. AIMSweb assessments focused on letter sounds, phonemic segmentation, and fluency, number identification, missing number, and quantity discrimination. Other forms of assessment include curriculum tests, spelling tests, letter sound assessments, letter naming assessments, blending assessments, and sight word assessments given throughout the school year. The literacy proficiency goal for first grade was that every student recognized upper and lowercase letters and their sounds, had a clear understanding of phoneme segmentation, and began reading simple text passages.

The assessments for second grade students included various measures of reading and math that focused on fluency and reading comprehension, math concepts and applications. They included fluency tests given several times a year, weekly spelling tests, curriculum unit tests throughout the year, and AIMSweb assessments three times during the school year. The literacy proficiency goal of second grade was that every student was reading fluently and had strong comprehension skills.

Third grade assessed students with several grade level common assessments to measure reading and math proficiency throughout the year. The assessment methods included reading curriculum assessments, curriculum unit assessments, curriculum fluency assessments, and AIMSweb assessments in fluency, comprehension, math concepts and applications three times during the year. In addition to the curriculum tests, spelling tests were administered weekly, fluency tests were administered two or more times per year and the results were shared during parent teacher conferences and through ongoing teacher communications. The literacy proficiency goal for third grade was for every student to fluently read and comprehend grade level text.

In addition to direct instruction, 4<sup>th</sup> grade incorporated Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time during the day. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade's Hawk Reading program provided specific targets for students, as a group, to reach a specific book total. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) was held each week, on Mondays and Wednesdays during advisory time. Teachers of the four core disciplines took students to the library to promote reading for enjoyment.

#### Current Student Achievement Plans

The goal of the Literacy Plan was for all students to be reading at or above grade level. An RtI process was implemented to address academic as well as behavioral deficiencies. Through this process, collecting progressing monitoring data guided instruction as part of the initiative of increasing proficiency.

### **Current Student Achievement Plans**

#### Elementary:

- The goal of the Literacy Plan was for all students to be reading at or above grade level.
- An RtI process was implemented to address academic as well as behavioral deficiencies. Through this process, collecting progressing monitoring data guided instruction as part of the initiative of increasing proficiency.
- Hermantown Elementary addressed PBIS through the incorporation of the HAWKS plan. (**H**ard work, **A**ttitude counts, **W**ork Hard, **K**indness, **S**afe). PBIS practices are integrated into the plan to support positive behavior interventions. Boys Town practices continued to be the foundation of this program.

#### Middle School:

- EXPLORE assessment was administered to 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade to gauge interest in certain professional fields.
- PBIS initiative was supported by:
  - providing structured and safe learning environments and breaks when needed
  - establishing positive staff/student relationships by listening to student concerns and responding respectfully, celebrating success, preparing students for transitions/change, and use positive language;
  - providing accommodations and instruction at the student's learning level to promote their success, allow students to make choices;
  - model and teach self-regulation, de-escalation and self-management strategies and
  - implementing Boys Town Life Skills model for all functional behavior skills.

### **Broad Outcome Impact**

#### All Students Ready for Kindergarten

- Prior to starting Kindergarten classes, all students participated in pre-school screening. During the year, "*Bridges to Kindergarten*" was offered to School-Readiness students three times. Sessions focused on literacy, math and social/emotional development. This offered parents and incoming students the opportunity to meet with a Kindergarten teacher, communicate Kindergarten expectations, administer assessments and listen to parental input.



### All Third Graders Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

- Progress toward literacy targets of 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> graders was measured throughout the year using AIMSweb, common grade level assessments and curriculum assessments.

### Closing the Achievement Gap

- Staff utilizes numerous sources of data to determine the needs of ALL students and implements the instructional strategies based on the demonstrated needs of each student. The categorizing of a student into a subgroup is not factored into determining their instructional needs.

### All Students Career and College Ready by Graduation

- EXPLORE test administered to 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade developmental counseling program
- Consistent school-wide events that promote the value of post-secondary education
- Hands on skills taught in Industrial Tech, FACS and the Arts.
- Implementation of Career Exploration class for 9<sup>th</sup> graders and their creation of Career Portfolio
- Counseling Department sponsored parent/student events for college/career planning, college admissions testing and financial aid application.
- Counseling Department provides opportunities for juniors and seniors to attend career fairs.

### All Students Graduate

- Middle School Advisors and High School Counselors monitor all student grades and mid-term and end of term. Academic Progress Procedure requires credit completion to advance to next grade level in High School..
- Credit monitoring and the offering of remediation courses during the school year and summer insured progress toward graduation
- K-8 instructional staff implemented intervention process to identify
- FOCUS program provided an alternative learning opportunity for students that struggle to learn in the traditional learning environment.

## Local Literacy Plan

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Local Literacy Plan Requirements Specified in Statute 120B.12:

**Literacy Goal:** It is the goal of the Hermantown Elementary School to have all students reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3. Teachers provide comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction which is evaluated for effectiveness related to student achievement.

### **Reading Proficiency Goals and Objectives**

Hermantown Elementary School will provide reading instruction in each classroom every school day utilizing a variety of instructional methods. Reading instruction is highly prioritized in the structure of the daily schedule. It is essential for children to be successful as they enter the

middle school and high school settings. Support services are provided in grades K-3. Some examples of the support offered at Hermantown Elementary include: Minnesota Reading Corps Literacy Tutors, Title I and differentiated skills groups. Our third grade students consistently perform well above state average on the MCA reading assessments.

At the very center of literacy in early childhood are the precursors that need to be in place in order for formalized reading and writing to take place. The early childhood view of literacy is a process of learning and experiencing these precursors. This process is continuous and includes experiences, opportunities, challenges and successes. Literacy as it applies to early childhood includes six main areas of growth and understanding. These six areas are needed to build a literacy foundation that will provide ample support for future formalized learning of literacy skills.

They include:

1. Disposition to read: Interest in books and joy of reading; listening intently to stories; need to explore books; asking to be read to,
2. Vocabulary and oral language: Organization of thoughts and ideas; words create reaction/results; vocabulary building; conversations
3. Narrative skills and comprehension: Understanding new information; making connections; asking questions connecting stories to real life.
4. Print motivation and awareness: understand print is spoken words written down; print serves a purpose; understanding concepts; knowing the difference between drawing and writing; understanding print serves a purpose
5. Letter/word knowledge: Reciting the alphabet; naming letters; knowing letters come in two forms; letters put together form words; recognizing name in print
6. Phonological awareness: Ability to hear the sounds of language apart from its meaning; discriminating one sound from another; recognizing similar beginning sounds of words; rhyming; familiarizing with syllables; alliteration; number of words in a sentence.

The adopted language arts curriculum for grades kindergarten through grade three is scientifically research-based and aligns with the Minnesota State Standards. Kindergarten classrooms will use strategies such as read alouds (shared and choral reading), read to self, read to someone, guided reading, word work, writing (interactive/shared), and modeling to engage students to think, make connections, pose questions, visualize, make predictions and retell stories. Based on these activities and strategies that have shown success in the past, the goal by the end of kindergarten is that every student can recognize upper and lowercase letters and their sounds, as well as beginning phoneme segmentation, in order to be proficient.

Reading goals and objectives progress into grade one classrooms where the main priority is on knowledge of sight words, decoding and segmenting words, and recognizing/reproducing upper and lower case letters and their sounds. The emergence of beginning readers is fostered by students utilizing their independent skills through reading grade and skill level appropriate fiction, non-fiction, and picture books. Based on these activities and strategies that have shown success in the past, the goal by the end of grade one is that every student can recognize upper and lowercase letters and their sounds, have a clear understanding of phoneme segmentation, and begin reading simple text passages in order to be proficient.

Reading fluently and with high levels of comprehension is the main goal for second grade students. Reading to understand and to gain information is important at this level. Teachers review AIMSweb data to determine the effectiveness of the instruction and curriculum. Using a structured comprehensive curriculum along with activities and strategies that have been

effective in the classroom, the goal by the end of grade two is that every student is reading fluently as well as having strong comprehension in order to be proficient.

The main objectives in grade three include a variety of reading opportunities to ensure phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension, and sight vocabulary proficiency. Teachers review AIMSweb data to evaluate instruction and student needs. They also provide emphasized preparation for skills that are assessed on the Reading MCA's. Based on these activities and strategies, the goal by the end of grade three is that every student is reading fluently, becoming more of an independent reader, and continuing to have strong comprehension skills.

The Hermantown Elementary Special Education program continuously monitors student progress in reading. The teachers collaborate with classroom teachers and differentiate the classroom instruction to a tier three level for their students. Individual Education Plans are completed for each student and goals and objectives are formulated by the special education team and parents.

### **Reading Proficiency Assessments, Results, and Parent Communication**

Hermantown Elementary School utilizes various reading assessment throughout the school year to measure each student's reading progress in kindergarten through third grade. The assessments include AIMSweb, curriculum assessments and grade level common assessments. The assessment data is used to determine students who are not yet reading proficiently. Parents are informed of the results after each of the school-wide assessments.

Literacy assessment at the School Readiness level is based on the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. Classroom activities and design of the environment are in line with these indicators, through the use of the *Creative Curriculum*. The *Creative Curriculum* is aligned with the Minnesota Early Learning Indicators of Progress, and provides the basis for planning and development of the School Readiness classroom experiences.

The lesson ideas come from many different sources. For instance, at teacher meetings, we periodically review the ECIP's and share lesson plan activities, books, and lessons to ensure the integration and teaching of all domains. Our desired outcome is that by May, each of our children in the School Readiness Program will meet the indicators of progress outlined in the ECIPs Language and Literacy Development Domain. We assess the progress in each of our School Readiness students two times a year, through the use of the research-based *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum* for 3-5 year olds. This assessment is aligned with the Creative Curriculum and therefore aligned with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

Literacy instruction and assessment in kindergarten through third grade are based on the Minnesota State Standards. Kindergarten students are given AIMSweb assessments three times during the school year. The AIMSweb kindergarten assessments include letter naming, letter sounds, and phonemic segmentation. Classroom teachers also assess students in comprehension, identification of high frequency words, and phonological awareness in a variety of methods including adopted curriculum materials. Correlating to these assessments, the proficiency goals for every kindergarten student is that he or she can recognize upper and lowercase letters and their sounds as well as beginning phoneme segmentation.

First grade students are given similar assessments to measure reading proficiency. The AIMSweb assessment is administered three times a year. These assessments focus on letter

sounds, phonemic segmentation, and fluency. Other forms of assessment include reading curriculum tests, spelling tests, letter sound assessments, letter naming assessments, blending assessments, and sight word assessments given throughout the school year. The end of the year proficiency goal for first grade is that every student can recognize upper and lowercase letters and their sounds, have a clear understanding of phoneme segmentation, and begin reading simple text passages.

The assessments for second grade students include various measures of reading that focus on fluency and reading comprehension. They include fluency tests given several times a year. Weekly spelling tests, curriculum unit tests throughout the year, and AIMSweb assessments three times during the school year. The proficiency goal by the end of second grade is that every student is reading fluently as well as comprehending strongly.

Third grade assesses students with several grade level common assessments to measure reading proficiency throughout the year. The assessment methods include reading curriculum assessments, curriculum unit assessments, curriculum fluency assessments, and AIMSweb assessments in fluency and comprehension three times during the year. In addition to the curriculum tests, spelling tests are administered weekly, fluency tests are administered two or more times per year and the results are shared during parent teacher conferences and through ongoing teacher communications. The end of the year proficiency goal for third grade is that every child is reading fluently and comprehending well at the third grade level.

Special education identifies diagnostic assessment processes and data that support staff in matching student needs with instructional practices that have the greatest likelihood of closing the achievement gap. SLD diagnostic assessment tools include the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement. The data that may be collected from this assessment tool include: basic reading skills, reading comprehension, and broad reading skills. Sub-tests include: letter/word identification, reading fluency, passage comprehension, story word attack, and reading vocabulary. This data is matched with instructional practices and curriculum that best meet the student's needs.

Included is the progress monitoring process and available data that support staff in evaluating the effectiveness of instruction and in adjusting instruction as needed to maximize growth towards proficiency. SLD student's IEP goals and objectives in reading are determined by the IEP team and are based on the individual student needs and present level of performance. Objectives are revised when a student meets the criteria of the objectives based on the IEP goal/objective requirement. Progress reports on goals and objectives are required for SLD students at the same rate as report cards are delivered to general education students. They are delivered to parents based on the methods determined on the student's current IEP. A communication plan is outlined and timelines are established for sharing screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring data and results with parents or guardians for all students not meeting grade level proficiency expectations. SLD students must have an annual IEP team meeting based on the student's present level of performance.

All grade level teachers at Hermantown Elementary communicate with parents at pre-arranged parent/teacher conferences in the fall and at special education IEP meetings throughout the year. They are also available for meetings with parents throughout the year. Classroom teachers communicate regularly through newsletters and websites. Title One staff communicates with parents through regular progress monitoring and through periodic phone calls and email. The parents are also invited to a parent night and they are encouraged to join the Title One parent

input committee. These parents are also encouraged to participate in a Title One survey to offer input on the quality of the Title One program.

### **Notify Parents About Their Child's Literacy Development**

Every student at Hermantown Elementary School is assessed throughout the year to provide ongoing progress monitoring of their progress and to update parents on their child's reading proficiency.

The curriculum and literacy interventions used in the elementary classrooms are scientifically research based and have been aligned with the Minnesota State Standards to ensure that each student's needs are met. The curriculum utilized in the Title One and special education instruction coincides with the state standards. It also delves in more intensely for each child's needs. Students are assessed consistently throughout the year to provide identification of struggling readers and to offer specialized services or interventions when required. Teachers collaborate through weekly and monthly grade level meetings to determine appropriate services for specific needs. They also monitor progress to determine if further services are necessary. This assists teachers in curriculum adjustments and instructional methods to meet the needs of individual students. There is a high level of communication and collaboration among classroom teachers and specialized regarding progress. This enhances the communication with parents regarding student progress. When students are struggling academically or behaviorally, teachers may refer them to BAIT (Behavior, Academic, and Intervention Team). This team offers research based interventions for teachers to assist in student progress.

The staff at Hermantown Elementary communicates with parents often throughout the school year regarding student needs and abilities. They also provide strategies that parents can use to help further their child's reading proficiency. This is accomplished via parent phone calls, letters, newsletters, teacher websites, reading activities, and materials such as site word practices, vocabulary words, spelling words and weekly reading stories. Parents are provided literacy progress information at parent/teacher conferences, letters, phone calls, HAWKS Camp, Kindergarten Round-Up in the spring, Bridges to Kindergarten for pre-school children and their parents, and the Title One Make-and Take Night. Parents of students not reading proficiently will be notified by June 7 and will be provided a list of strategies and materials to work on over the summer.

### **Interventions and Instructional Supports**

Core literacy instruction is aligned with Minnesota State Standards and benchmarks. The instruction is based on individual student needs. Students who are not reading at grade level are provided literacy interventions via our intervention team recommendations.

When students are referred to the BAIT process, a collaborative plan for interventions and instructional support is implemented. Within this process, students are monitored for six weeks regarding the student's reading skills. After six weeks of interventions, the BAIT group meets to review student progress. If progress is made, the teacher continues the intervention. The BAIT group also determines whether the first intervention will continue or if a new intervention is necessary. If progress has not occurred, the classroom teacher begins the new recommended intervention. This intervention also occurs for six weeks and the teacher continues to monitor progress. After the six weeks of the new intervention, if the student has not made progress with adequate results, the student is then referred to the Child Study Team (CST). At that point, the CST determines whether special education assessment is appropriate.

Minnesota Reading Corps tutors provide additional Instructional support to students who are on the 'bubble'. These students do not qualify for Title One services, but are below targeted

reading levels. These tutors provide research-based literacy interventions. Classroom teachers have regularly scheduled grade level meetings with the Title One teacher, reading intervention specialist, and the principal. These meetings allow opportunities to analyze data and use it to determine the effectiveness of the core instruction and interventions.

**If you have any questions or would like additional  
information about items included in this report,  
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