

Hugoton Schools Revised Innovative District Application

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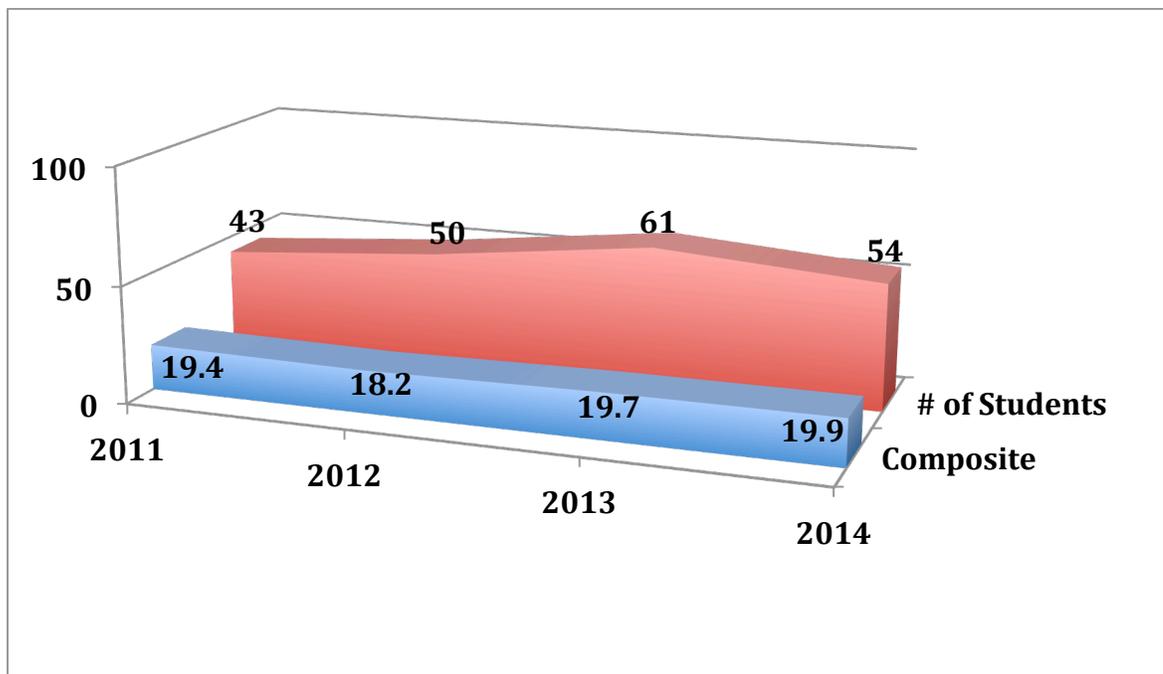
USD 210 BOE approved on August 21, 2014

The reason Hugoton schools exist is to prepare all students for college and career readiness. The mission of our district is to ensure academic achievement for all students through **R**elevant education opportunities, **R**igorous coursework, in an environment built around caring **R**elationships. The most distinct Board goal we have focused on is to “...better prepare student for college, career and/or the workforce with high quality skills, goals, and dreams for their future.” (BOE goal, Feb. 2011) To this end, a timeline of significant initiatives implemented in the district is listed below.

District strategic planning:

- ✚ BOE set district goals tied to new mission statement - August 2007
- ✚ First USD 210 Success Plan, BOE approved - December 2009
- ✚ State Assessments and NCLB focus de-emphasized and an aggressive transition into Kansas College and Career Ready Standards (KCCRS), BOE approved - August 2011
- ✚ Professional development by national consultants (West Ed) contracted for an average of four in-service days per school year to work with teachers to build a KCCRS aligned, guaranteed, and viable curriculum in Math and English-Language Arts K-12. Sept. 2011-present (four school years)
- ✚ Development of Individual Plan of Study expectations (IPoS) in 6th-8th grade. December 2012
- ✚ College and career ready (CCR) advocates trained and in place (7th-12th grade). July 2013
- ✚ Innovative Council formed to guide Innovative District initiatives. August 2014

ACT Results: Increased rigor and relevance in our K-12 system, with more of a focus on post-high school success has led to an increase of students taking the ACT and to higher composite scores. In 2011, 43 students or 14% of the high school population took the ACT, with a composite of 19.4. In 2013, 61 students or 21% took the ACT, with a composite of 19.7. In 2014, 54 students or 20% of the student population took the ACT, with a composite of 19.9.



Description of the Interest and Support

A “Student Voice” luncheon session was conducted on August 18, 2014. A diverse group of student leaders were invited and 16 students attended. The purpose of this hour-long session was to provide an informal forum for students to hear about our vision and mission related to CCR and innovation, and to allow them time to critique our current system, our plans for improvement, and to offer up ideas in a safe student-centered environment. Their ideas were acknowledged and recorded, and the interaction was deemed to be a success by the attending administrators and HHS Counselor.

On the evening of August 19, 2014, the USD 210 Innovation Council met for the first time. This Council consists of parents, high school students, patrons, staff, and a USD 210 Board member. The charge of this committee is to provide counsel and leadership related to the District’s attempts to make all students college, career, and workforce ready, with a focus on the Innovative Coalition application. If USD 210 is approved as an Innovative Coalition district, this council will meet a minimum of twice a year to look at goals and results and provide input as to the direction of our CCR Innovations. A total of 20 members attended this first meeting. Two of the “Student Voice” participants were present, and some of the same discussion questions were utilized. This Council was given a copy of the revised USD 210 Innovative District application.

Input and Support from the Innovative Council: The Kansas College and Career Ready Standards (KCCRS), our CCR Advocate initiative, and the development of an Individual Plan of Study (IPoS) in 6-8th grade, had strong stakeholder support. **The Innovative Council wants USD 210 to move forward with the revised application to the Innovative Coalition.**

At the August 21, 2014, USD 210 BOE meeting, the topic of the Innovative designation was a discussion item. Board member Paula Rowden summarized the Innovative Council meeting highlights from earlier in the week. Later in the Board meeting, the USD 210 BOE voted 6-1 to support the revised application. The motion read as follows: *“Motion to approve the revised application and the Innovative Council’s input for USD 210 to become an Innovative District as described in HB 2319.”*

Specific Goals and Measurable Student Outcomes

Our entire Board of Education and Administration Team has studied and believes strongly in the District Leadership That Works research and in the defined autonomy each school’s leadership team should follow (Marzano & Waters, 2009). Because of our belief in this framework, the USD 210 Board of Education has annually adopted non-negotiable goals for student achievement (See figure 1.1) and non-negotiable goals for effective instruction since 2010-2011. Each year these goals are carefully updated based on the North West Evaluation Associations’ research based, statistical methodologies for individual student growth on assessments from fall to spring. The KCCRS aligned, student achievement growth goals are established in reading, math, and science, and the results are reported at a Board of Education meeting every spring. This data is part of multiple student measures the district is using as a significant factor in the evaluation of classroom teachers and building leaders.

Figure 1.1: An example of past BOE approved KCCRS aligned, non-negotiable goals for student achievement. This graphs shows that 8 out of 9 grade levels made their growth targets in math, and 6 out of 9 made it in reading.

Student Achievement Goals (MAP) – Spring 2013

Grade	MAP - Math	MAP - Reading
3	53 (95)	58 (87.3)
4	53 (78.7)	59 (59)
5	74 (67.7)	67 (76.7)
6	62 (80.3)	57 (70.8)
7	71 (71.2)	53 (70.6)
8	67 (82.1)	65 (61.2)
9	63 (86.8)	65 (65.3)
10	64 (68.1)	54 (42)
11	67 (67)	53 (43)

Goals based on # of students meeting growth targets

Numbers outside () Indicate Goal Set
 ()- Grade Level Met Goal
 ()- Grade Level Did Not Meet Goal

Figure 1.2 = Non-negotiable student growth goals for the current school year.

“All” and “ELL” Subgroups Goals – Spring 2015

Grade Level	MAP Math	MAP Reading
3	<u>60%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>52%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>70%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>74%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
4	<u>61%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>78%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>77%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>63%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
5	<u>71%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>81%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>69%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>84%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
6	<u>72%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>81%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>84%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>59%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
7	<u>79%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>70%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>58%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>71%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
8	<u>69%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>59%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>69%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>77%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
9	<u>65%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>71%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>71%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>52%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
10	<u>60%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>82%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>53%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>46%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.
11	<u>70%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>100%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.	<u>56%</u> of “All” will meet growth targets. <u>85%</u> of “ELL” will meet growth targets.

Goals Based on
Percentage Meeting
Growth Targets

We want to hold ourselves accountable to reaching these goals (Figure 1.2) this school year. We also want a higher level of public accountability because of our potential membership in the Innovative Coalition. During the 2014-2015 school year, these goals will be discussed in grade level and department Professional Learning Community meetings, in school Site Councils, and on our district web site. Each Building Leadership Team will collaborate on how to make the attainment of these goals a reality. At the May 18, 2015, BOE meeting, we will publically report the results on these student achievement goals.

Figure 1.3 = Future Student Achievement goals for both “All” students and also “ELLs”

ACT ASPIRE Benchmark Goals – Spring 2017				
Grade	Aspire /ACT Math	Aspire/ACT Writing	Aspire/ACT English	Aspire Science
3	<u>50%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.			
4	<u>50%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.			
5	<u>50%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.			
6	<u>50%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.			
7	<u>50%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.			
8	<u>60%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>60%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>60%</u> will meet CCR benchmark.	<u>60%</u> will meet CCR benchmark.
9	<u>70%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>70%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>70%</u> will meet CCR benchmark.	<u>70%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.
10	<u>80%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>80%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.	<u>80%</u> will meet CCR benchmark.	<u>80%</u> will meet CCR benchmark score.
11-12	Individualized assessments per student's IPoS.			



Since 2010, Hugoton students have been taking both the EXPLORE test in 8th grade and the PLAN test in 10th grade. The results are discussed with students and parents. In 2013, the EXPLORE test was expanded to 7th and 9th grade. From multiple years of results, we know the goals in Figure 1.3 will be quite challenging to achieve as the EXPLORE and PLAN tests are morphed into the ACT ASPIRE system. We believe that for any group of students to have 70-80% benchmark success on the ACT ASPIRE is a highly rigorous, internationally-normed goal.

Explanation of how pupil performance in achieving the specified outcomes will be measured

USD 210 will measure the growth of all students using the NWEA’s Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) in grades 3-11. We will also use ACT Aspire in grades 3-10. This data will be disaggregated by sub-group, with an emphasis on growth for all students, students of poverty, and English Language Learners (ELL). Specific goals for “all” students and “ELL” students are listed in Figure 1.2. Future ACT ASPIRE goals are listed above in Figure 1.3.

Laws, rules and/or regulations the district feels need to be waived in order to accomplish the planned innovation(s).

The following are the state laws, rules, and regulations from which the district is requesting to be exempt.

1. Assessment – Waiver from, in P.L 107-110, Title I Part A, Sec 111(b) (3) Academic Assessments and P.L 107-110, Title I Part A, Sec. 111 (b) (2) accountability from United States Department of Education Non-Regulatory Guidance on Title I, Part A
2. Teacher Licensure – Waiver from K.S.A 72-1371 (does not allow individuals with industry expertise to teach high school classes)
3. Regents University admission requirements (High School Credit in middle school) – Waiver from K.A.R 88-29 (prohibits high school level classes taken in middle school from counting towards Kansas Board of Regents admission requirements)
4. Paying College Tuition – Waiver from K.S.A 72-11a05 (prohibits school districts from paying tuition and transportation costs for students concurrently enrolled in high school and college classes)
5. Preschool programs; fees - Waiver from K.S.A. 72-67,115 (prohibits pre-school fees from being used as operating expenses)

Additional Comments and Findings

In our original Innovative application, dated December 2013, USD 210 asked to be exempt from mandatory KELPA testing of all English Language Learners. The KELPA is the Kansas test for English Language Proficiency mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Through our extensive literature review on the topic of effective ELL assessment practices, and with the on-site assistance and consulting from KSDE's Phyllis Farrar (Education Program Consultant for World Languages, Standards, and Assessment Services), **we are hopeful for different test relief options for our ELL students.** In addition, we took teams of teachers and administrators to visit two Kansas districts with high ELL populations.

Therefore, after this literature review, expert on-site ELL consultation, and visits to high performing ELL programs, **USD 210 plans to give the KELPA - P test to all ELL's this school year.** We also have made a formal KSDE request to be a pilot district for the ELPA - 21. The insight we have gained from this Innovative application journey has led to revisions in our English language proficiency testing practices and protocols. We have greatly benefited from Phyllis Farrar and the visits to Emporia and Garden City Public Schools. We want to thank Ms. Farrar and these two school districts for their expert consultation and professional collaboration.

Summary of Literature Review on the testing of English Language Learners:

Under NCLB, the academic progress of ELLs was assessed in two ways:

1. Under Title I, ELLs were one of the mandated subgroups whose test scores were used to determine whether schools and districts met the goals for adequate yearly progress (AYP) based on state-level performance standards established for their students. ELLs were held to the same expectations as other subgroups regarding participation and attainment of proficiency on selected content area assessments (although ELL students were allowed a grace period during which the scores did not count).
2. Under Title III, ELLs must also demonstrate progress in attaining English language proficiency.

ELLs typically are tested more than other students. Not only must they take the regular state tests administered to all students and used for accountability under NCLB, but they must also take an annual English proficiency assessment under Titles I and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (i.e. - NCLB). States must report results of the English proficiency assessments and these same tests are used at the district and building level to decide when ELL students are ready to exit this status. Title III further requires states to develop standards for English language proficiency and a set of state targets to spur improvement. The extra testing reflects the fact that ELLs are expected to master regular academic content as defined by state standards, at the same time they are mastering the English language.

Questions have also arisen about the validity and fairness of interpretations of ELLs' test results. Some researchers and practitioners have noted that reading and math test results for ELLs are not valid indicators of what these students know and can do because the language of the test creates a barrier to demonstrating their actual skills. To address the difficulties of testing ELLs in a language they have not fully mastered, NCLB lets states offer a wide variety of test accommodations for students with limited English ability. The most commonly used accommodations for ELLs include using a bilingual dictionary, reading aloud of some test items in English, giving ELL's extra time, providing individual or small group administration of a test, and allowing test instructions in the test-taker's native language (Willner, 2008).

It is quite difficult, however, to adjust for the "downward language effect" because even with accommodations and even for tests of math and science, ELLs are still being assessed to a varying extent on both their English ability and the content at hand (Abedi & Dietel, 2004).

Findings: Because of language barriers, test results for English language learners may not accurately reflect what these students know and can do. It is difficult to design appropriate accommodations to compensate for ELLs' lack of English proficiency. Consequently, questions remain about the reliability of test scores for ELLs and the validity of inferences drawn from test results. (Center on Education Policy, 2010)

Therefore, USD 210 will continue to look for ways to reduce testing for ELL students, thus, buying them more time to learn academic English. If allowable, our first choice for an assessment exemption would be freedom from the Kansas state assessment. We believe our ELL students, on average, need to make between 12-14 months of academic gains each school year to be on track and on time for college and career readiness. Instructional time is precious, and in the spring of each year, we need to guard their time from the typical amount of over-testing.

Opportunity for Kansas Educators to Lead National Level Conversations: If one truly understands these findings and believes this over-testing, while sufficing one federal law is simultaneously and egregiously violating another by denying equal participation of ELL students into instructional programs; then, it is imperative solutions are enacted. Therefore, we believe this situation constitutes a civil rights violation. Furthermore, we want to begin conversations with Kansas educational leaders as well as national leaders and policy makers with the goal not just about heightened awareness of this issue, but also working together for solutions.

An excerpt from the United States Code § 1703. Denial of equal educational opportunity prohibited: No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by - (f) the failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.