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DR. SUSANNA M. MURPHY
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

BILL RICHARDSON
Governor

November 5, 2010

Dear New Mexico Educators, Parents, and Stakeholders:

Performance levels and passing scores are now being determined for the Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment (SBA/HSGA) that will be implemented in spring 2011, as specified in §22-13-1.1(L) NMSA 1978. These indicators will describe New Mexico's expectations for academic achievement of graduating high school students on the SBA, which is used to measure adequate yearly progress.

Performance level descriptors for the SBA/HSGA have been written by a statewide taskforce of 54 teachers, school and school district administrators, college and university faculty and administrators, community employers and education partners, and student assessment professionals. The taskforce described two levels of student performance, *On Track for Graduation* and *Not On Track for Graduation*, in reading, writing, social studies, mathematics, and science. The knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform at each level are described to inform parents and other stakeholders about the student's achievement and needs for additional support (please see attachments). The descriptor labels also recognize that other academic attainments are necessary for graduation.

The taskforce used a mediation process called bookmarking to obtain consensus performance level descriptors in each content area. These descriptors will be used to set passing scores on the SBA/HSGA and they will appear on the Student Report for Parents as one of several sources of information to assist parents in understanding their students' test scores.

Existing Grade 11 SBA performance level descriptors will continue in use for measuring student progress for adequate yearly progress that is required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I hereby adopt the attached documents as the State's official performance level descriptors for the Grade 11 SBA/HSGA.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susanna M. Murphy".

Susanna M. Murphy, Ph.D.
Secretary of Education

SMM/TD/dt

Attachment (1)

cc: Dr. Sheila Hyde, Deputy Secretary, Learning and Accountability
PED Executive Team
PED Leadership Team
Superintendents
Charter School Administrators
State Education Institution Administrators
District Test Coordinators
Partners List
Deans, Colleges of Education

Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment Performance Level Descriptors – Mathematics

A student who is **On Track For Graduation in Mathematics** exhibits a basic knowledge of high school level mathematics and demonstrates an ability to engage in mathematical thought processes.*

A student On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Thought Processing includes the abilities to:
 - Problem solve
 - Reason logically
 - Create multiple representations
 - Communicate mathematical concepts and ideas
 - Make connections among and between mathematical ideas
2. Mathematical Skills and Knowledge at this performance level include the abilities to:
 - Represent mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols
 - Recognize and apply patterns, relations, functions, and graphs
 - Use mathematical models to represent and understand quantitative relationships
 - Apply characteristics and properties of two- and three-dimensional geometric shapes
 - Specify locations and describe spatial relationships using coordinate geometry and other representational systems
 - Apply transformations and use symmetry to describe mathematical situations
 - Use visualizations, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems
 - Formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them
 - Select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze straightforward data and make predictions
 - Understand and apply basic concepts of probability

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

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A student who is **Not On Track For Graduation in Mathematics** does not exhibit some aspects of a basic knowledge of high school level math and inconsistently demonstrates an ability to engage in mathematical thought processes.*

A student Not On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Thought Processing demonstrates inconsistencies in the abilities to:
 - Problem solve
 - Reason logically
 - Create multiple representations
 - Communicate mathematical concepts and ideas
 - Make connections among and between mathematical ideas
2. Mathematical Skills and knowledge at this performance level demonstrate a limited ability to do one or more of the following:
 - Represent mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols
 - Recognize and apply patterns, relations, functions, and graphs
 - Use mathematical models to represent and understand quantitative relationships
 - Apply characteristics and properties of two- and three-dimensional geometric shapes
 - Specify locations and describe spatial relationships using coordinate geometry and other representational systems
 - Apply transformations and use symmetry to describe mathematical situations
 - Use visualizations, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems
 - Formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them
 - Select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze straightforward data and make predictions
 - Understand and apply basic concepts of probability

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment Performance Level Descriptors – Science

A student who is **On Track For Graduation in Science** will demonstrate competency in the scientific method, the scientific process, quantitative analysis, science content, and the interplay between science and society. *

A student On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities :

1. Designs, conducts and interprets the results of a scientific investigation using essential components of the scientific method and appropriate scientific expression.
2. Summarizes the processes and factors that are used to evaluate, validate, revise and reject scientific knowledge.
3. Applies appropriate quantitative skills and technologies to collect, analyze and manipulate data in order to identify and communicate scientific relationships.
4. Explains and make predictions about observations and phenomena regarding the relationship between the atomic and molecular structure of matter and the physical and chemical properties and reactivity.
5. Explains and make predictions about the transformation and transmission of energy and how energy and matter interact.
6. Explains and make predictions about the motion of objects and waves, and the forces that cause them.
7. Explains and make predictions about how biodiversity and complex interactions within ecosystems, including the cycling of matter and the flow of energy, affect the survival of individual organisms and the persistence of species.
8. Explains and make predictions using the genetic basis for inheritance and the basic concepts of biological evolution.
9. Explains and make connections between and among the structures, functions and processes occurring within cells.
10. Explains the scientific theories regarding the evolution and characteristics of the universe, solar system, and Earth.
11. Make predictions about the role of energy and matter related to changes in Earth's systems.
12. Recalls major scientific historical events and discoveries, and identify the limits of science and its applications.
13. Summarizes the consequences of various technological innovations, and evaluate the positive and negative impacts of science and technology on individuals and the larger society in which we live.

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

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A student who is **Not On Track For Graduation in Science** will demonstrate limited competency in the scientific method, the scientific process, quantitative analysis, science content, and the interplay between science and society. *

A student Not On Track for Graduation needs to further develop their abilities to:

1. Design, conduct and interpret the results of a scientific investigation using essential components of the scientific method and appropriate scientific expression.
2. Summarize the processes and factors that are used to evaluate, validate, revise and reject scientific knowledge.
3. Apply appropriate quantitative skills and technologies to collect, analyze and manipulate data in order to identify and communicate scientific relationships.
4. Explain and make predictions about observations and phenomena regarding the relationship between the atomic and molecular structure of matter and the physical and chemical properties and reactivity.
5. Explain and make predictions about the transformation and transmission of energy and how energy and matter interact.
6. Explain and make predictions about the motion of objects and waves, and the forces that cause them.
7. Explain and make predictions about how biodiversity and complex interactions within ecosystems, including the cycling of matter and the flow of energy, affect the survival of individual organisms and the persistence of species.
8. Explain and make predictions using the genetic basis for inheritance and the basic concepts of biological evolution.
9. Explain and make connections between and among the structures, functions and processes occurring within cells.
10. Explain the scientific theories regarding the evolution and characteristics of the universe, solar system, and Earth.
11. Make predictions about the role of energy and matter related to changes in Earth's systems.
12. Recall major scientific historical events and discoveries, and identify the limits of science and its applications.
13. Summarize the consequences of various technological innovations, and evaluate the positive and negative impacts of science and technology on individuals and the larger society in which we live.

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment Performance Level Descriptors – Reading

A student who is **On Track For Graduation in Reading** exhibits reading comprehension skills and is able to read, interpret and analyze informational text, media and literature.*

A student On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Reading and Understanding a Variety of Materials including informational text, media and literature includes abilities to:
 - Infer, analyze and synthesize information from a variety of media and texts
 - Understand, discover and articulate connections between an author’s message and purpose
 - Understand how stylistics, including tone, influence an author’s message
 - Understand a variety of genres including literary elements specific to any genre
 - Accurately interpret information in various formats
 - Apply vocabulary comprehension skills
2. Applying Effective Research Techniques includes abilities to:
 - Utilize the research process to find information pertinent to a specific purpose and audience
 - Evaluate information and sources for credibility, reliability, and validity
3. Understanding the Use of Logic includes abilities to:
 - Utilize critical thinking and abstract reasoning to make inferences regarding facts and opinions, the ideas of others and persuasive intent
 - Recognize logical fallacies and their impact on an argument

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

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A student who is **Not On Track For Graduation in Reading** might exhibit some reading comprehension skills but inconsistently demonstrates abilities to read, interpret and analyze informational text, media and literature.

A student Not On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Reads and Understands a Variety of Material including informational text, media and Literature includes abilities to:
 - Limited ability to infer, analyze or synthesize information from a variety of media and texts
 - Understands an author's overall message, but fails to connect it with author's purpose and style
 - Partially recognizes stylistics of an author's message
 - Understands some genres and/or some literary elements specific to any genre
 - Partially interprets information in various formats
 - Inaccurately applies vocabulary comprehension skills
2. Applies Research Techniques includes abilities to:
 - Utilize the research process to find information that may not be appropriate to a specific purpose and audience
 - Ineffectively evaluate information and sources for credibility, reliability, and validity
3. Understands the Use of Logic includes abilities to:
 - Utilize limited critical thinking and abstract reasoning resulting in inaccurate inferences regarding facts and opinions, the ideas of others or persuasive intent
 - Recognize some logical fallacies but not their impact on an argument

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment Performance Level Descriptors – Social Studies

A student who is **On Track For Graduation in Social Studies** consistently exhibits knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding of historical events; physical, natural and cultural processes; how governments function; and economic reasoning.

A student On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. **Social Studies Content Knowledge** includes abilities to:
 - Identify important eras, events and individuals
 - Understand perspective and points-of-view
 - Identify historical trends
 - Describe regions and their interrelationships
 - Understand economic systems
2. **Social Studies Skills and Processes** includes abilities to:
 - Correctly interpret historical events, maps, charts, graphs, data tables
 - Interpret primary and secondary source documents including founding documents of the New Mexico and Federal governments
 - Make predictions based on historical trends
3. **Social Studies Conceptual Understanding** includes abilities to:
 - Evaluate the impact and significance of major eras, events and individuals
 - Interpret perspective and points-of-view
 - Draw conclusions from various sources of information

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

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A student who is **Not On Track For Graduation in Social Studies** exhibits inadequate knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding of historical events; physical, natural and cultural processes; how governments function; and economic reasoning.

A student Not On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Social Studies Content Knowledge includes:
 - Sometimes identifies important events and individuals
 - Occasionally understands points-of-view
 - Sometimes recognizes historical trends
 - Partially describes regions
 - Minimally understands economic systems
2. Social Studies Skills and Processes includes:
 - Sometimes interprets maps and charts correctly
 - Inconsistently interprets primary and secondary source documents including founding documents of the New Mexico and Federal governments
3. Social Studies Conceptual Understanding includes:
 - Inability to evaluate the impact and significance of major eras, events and individuals
 - Inconsistently interprets perspective and points-of-view
 - Rarely draws conclusions from various sources of information

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

Grade 11 Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment Performance Level Descriptors – Writing

A student who is **On Track For Graduation in Writing** consistently exhibits knowledge of processes for planning, drafting, and editing; adapts writing to a specific purpose or audience; and demonstrates the necessary skills to produce examples of persuasive writing.*

A student On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. The Writing Process includes:
 - Evidence of planning
 - Established context and point of view
 - Ideas clearly and precisely expressed
 - Focus maintained throughout with a logical progression of ideas
 - Relevant, supporting examples, reasons, and evidence to support their position
 - Organization: an introduction, clear transitions, well- constructed paragraphs, and a conclusion that does not merely restate the essential ideas
2. Adapting Writing to Purpose and Audience process includes:
 - Recognition and engagement of audience (understands audience background and knowledge)
 - Utilizing language effectively to persuade the audience
 - Utilizing language appropriate to audience (informal/formal, technical, literary language)
 - Effective use of figurative language to engage the audience (metaphors, imagery)
 - Anticipating and addressing the reader’s concerns and counter claims
3. Language Use includes:
 - Editing of written work, demonstrating control of standard written English (grammar usage, mechanics)
 - Usage of a variety of sentence structures, beginnings, and lengths
 - Tone/voice which is consistent and clear
 - Apt and content-appropriate vocabulary

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.

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A student who is **Not On Track For Graduation in Writing** exhibits some knowledge of processes for planning, drafting, and editing; sometimes adapts writing to a specific purpose or audience; and inconsistently demonstrates the necessary skills to produce examples of persuasive writing.*

A student Not On Track for Graduation demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

1. Applies the Writing Process includes:
 - Exhibits some evidence of planning
 - Does not always establish a clear context or point of view
 - Ideas are not always expressed clearly and precisely
 - Focus is not always maintained and the progression of ideas is not always logical
 - Supporting examples, reasons, and evidence are sometimes relevant, but do not consistently support the position
 - Organization includes an introduction, but transitions may not be clear, and paragraphs may not always be well constructed, and a conclusion tends to restate the essential idea
2. Adapts Writing to Purpose and Audience includes:
 - Has a limited understanding of audience background and knowledge; may not engage the audience
 - Seldom uses language effectively to persuade the audience
 - Uses language that is sometimes appropriate to audience (informal/formal, technical, literary language)
 - Use of figurative language may not successfully engage the audience (metaphors, imagery)
 - Sometimes anticipates and addresses the reader's concerns and counter claims
3. Language Use includes:
 - Edits written work, demonstrating some control of standard written English (grammar usage, mechanics)
 - Uses a limited variety of sentence structures, beginnings, and lengths
 - Tone/voice is not always consistent and clear
 - Vocabulary is not always apt and content-appropriate

* See SBA benchmark scores for information on subarea performance.