

D214 Response to Illinois Proficiency Standards

District 214 metrics on the State of Illinois Proficiency Benchmarks reflect our growing population of students with multiple at-risk factors that were exacerbated during the COVID pandemic. District 214 developed and presented to the Board of Education the following plans to directly address academic performance and state testing benchmarks.

- Learning Renewal Plan to address overall academic performance 2021-2024
- A multi-year plan to address College Board SAT performance on state assessment
- Significant expansion of mental health supports and staffing for English learners

WHAT DOES THE STATE OF ILLINOIS PROFICIENCY BENCHMARKS REPORTED ON THE STATE REPORT CARD MEAN?

Beginning in the spring of 2017, the Illinois State Board of Education began requiring all public-school students in grade 11 to take the College Board SAT with Essay. This annual assessment determines the proficiency level reported under Academic Progress on the Illinois School Report Card in ELA (English Language Arts) and Math.

Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: Students who meet the state's 540-point benchmark have not only performed in the top third of all test-takers nationally, they have scored at least 60 points higher than one would need to meet the prerequisite performance level for enrollment in College Composition or Literature at any Illinois community college or university a year before graduation.

For the Class of 2022, 79% of D214 students met the 430-point benchmark to enroll in the Eastern Illinois University College Composition and College Literature courses and 64% met the College Board's National Benchmark of 480-points for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing.

Math: Students who meet the 540-point state benchmark have not only performed in the top third of all test-takers nationally, they meet the prerequisite performance level for enrollment in College Calculus at any Illinois community college or university a year before graduation.

For the Class of 2022, 79% of D214 students met the 430-point benchmark to enroll in the Eastern Illinois University College Quantitative Literacy course and 48% met the College Board's National Benchmark of 530-points for College Calculus.

WHAT IS DISTRICT 214 DOING TO RESPOND TO LEARNING LOSS AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC TO INCREASE THE OVERALL ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF STUDENTS AS MEASURED BY GRADES AND CREDITS TOWARD GRADUATION?

On July 29, 2021, The Board of Education approved the Learning Renewal Plan, which outlines a safe return of all students for the 2021-2022 school year and expanded academic interventions through the 2024 school year.

The plan includes:

- Guidance for in-person instruction following steps issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Embedded access to instructional support during the school day
- Expanded mental health supports
- Summer language arts and math interventions for incoming and returning students
- Small-group and individualized academic interventions for specialized populations including students in poverty, English learners, and students with disabilities
- Expanded opportunities for enrichment and more

The full plan can be reviewed at this link: [Learning Renewal Plan](#)

The most recent BOE presentation February 9, 2023, can be reviewed at this link: [Learning Renewal Plan Update](#)

WHAT IS DISTRICT 214 DOING TO SUPPORT INCREASED LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY PERFORMANCE ON THE ILLINOIS-ADMINISTERED COLLEGE BOARD SAT ASSESSMENT?

Academic Interventions in Math Program 2023-2025

- Improve and increase all students' mathematical skill acquisition and mastery as measured by SAT growth and benchmark metrics
- Improve and implement engaging instructional strategies to deepen all students' conceptual understanding of mathematics
- Increase instructional time in math through structured interventions
- Utilize small-group instruction to address executive functioning skills

The Academic Interventions in Mathematics (AIM) Program is designed to support the 43% of students who enter D214 in 6th-grade math or lower (Level 1) per PSAT 8 Math. The BOE supported the use of federal ESSER funds to hire 15 additional math teachers for the delivery of this program.

AIM Program Focus:

- Building students' foundational math skills
- Supporting students two grade levels or more behind in skills in Algebra I

AIM Program Description:

- Cohorts of students who meet with certified math teachers (interventionists) during their AIM course
- Teachers develop and instruct targeted curricula to remediate and accelerate students
- Curriculum focuses on individualized skill deficits and ensures students are making significant progress in their math course
- Cohorts meet 10 times per 6-week cycle
- Students receive an additional 80-120 minutes of math instruction per week (33% increase to block)

State Assessment: College Board SAT Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

- The SAT Strategic Plan consists of three components: Communication, Professional Development, Data Analysis
- Creation of a District SAT Steering Committee with Interdisciplinary SAT CORE Teams in reading, writing, and math staffed with representatives from all schools
- Identifying in-house experts (PLC leaders, instructional coaches, etc)
- Development of teacher-led professional development
- Implementation of regular benchmark testing at all schools freshman through junior year
- Focus on differentiation strategies and supporting at-risk learners
- Expanding access to SAT Prep during the school day and in the summer at no cost
- Data analysis of performance level provided by the SAT Steering Committee annually

HOW IS DISTRICT 214 RESPONDING TO THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS AND THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ENGLISH LEARNERS?

District 214 is taking steps to support students and staff in the midst of the national mental health crisis. The Board of Education agreed to hire additional personnel to meet the social-emotional needs of students. This includes the hiring of additional school social workers and school psychologists to be placed at each D214 high school. In addition to hiring more school social workers and school psychologists, the District is exploring new community partnerships to increase prevention and wellness efforts as well as leveraging technology to expand access to mental health services.

Click [HERE](#) to see the full presentation from February 21, 2023, Special Board of Education Workshop.

HOW DO I KNOW AS A PARENT THAT MY STUDENT IS READY FOR ACADEMIC AND CAREER SUCCESS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

District 214 is the leader in the state in providing access to early college credit and career exploration activities. The best measure of readiness and predictor of success in college-level coursework are grades earned in actual college-level coursework. Graduates of District 214 are leaving with 85% having already earned college credit in math and/or English, 50% participating in College Board Advanced Placement coursework, and 96% identifying a career pathway of interest through career exploration activities such as work-based learning.

HOW DOES THE RECENT RECOGNITION BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT OF MANY SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN OUR STATE MAKE SENSE WITH LOW PROFICIENCY RATES?

State Superintendent Tony Sanders responded to this in his March 21 Weekly Message To the State:

*“Illinois educators have a lot to be proud of. According to U.S. News & World Report, our state **ranks #6** in the nation for prek-12 education. Six Illinois districts are among the **top 20 public school districts** in the nation, including claiming the top two spots. Last year, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (aka “The Nation’s Report Card”) showed that our students scored above the national average in both reading and math for Grades 4 and 8, while many other states saw declines. And we rank #11 for youth mental health.*

So why does Illinois have an average proficiency rate of 30.1% (high school)? What does that mean?

Illinois has the most rigorous standards in the nation. Each state measures “proficiency” differently. It’s like comparing home runs across ballparks with vastly different outfields or comparing someone’s mile time on a flat track versus mountain terrain.

Being “proficient” in Illinois requires much more than reading on grade level. Our standards include a depth and breadth of higher-order language arts skills, including writing, logic, critical thinking, and analysis. Out of five levels, only the top two count as “proficient” in Illinois. These high standards guide us to ensure our students are truly ready for rigorous content at the next grade level.”