DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
for
LITTLETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Prepared by
Learning Support Team
Lucinda Hundley
Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services
Bonnie Miller
Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services

November 2004
I. Performance Goals

A. AYP Goals

2003-04 Update Goal

1. Yes.

2. No: The 2003 AYP goals were not achieved at the middle level for the subgroup of Students with Disabilities. The goal for 2004 is to increase middle level reading performance of 65.14% partially proficient, proficient, and advanced by 5.47% to reach the state AYP benchmark of 73.61%.

2004-05 Update Goal

1. Yes: The district met 2004 AYP goals for all subgroups with the exception of middle level Students with Disabilities, based on the upper confidence limit. The district meets or exceeds 2005 AYP benchmark goals, with the exception of the subgroups of Hispanic, English Language Learners, Economically Disadvantaged and Students with Disabilities at the middle level, and Students with Disabilities at the high school level per the following chart. The goal for 2004-2005 is to sustain or improve performance of all subgroups to meet new targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Am Ind</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>Econ Disad</th>
<th>Sits w/Dis</th>
<th>2004 Target</th>
<th>2005 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elem</td>
<td>96.08%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>94.86</td>
<td>90.91</td>
<td>92.95</td>
<td>96.60</td>
<td>87.39</td>
<td>88.65</td>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>76.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>93.34%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>95.95</td>
<td>85.19</td>
<td>77.82</td>
<td>94.61</td>
<td>66.53</td>
<td>75.67</td>
<td>62.09</td>
<td>73.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>95.39%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87.50</td>
<td>96.41</td>
<td>89.86</td>
<td>84.44</td>
<td>75.96</td>
<td>79.65</td>
<td>84.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. No: The district did not meet the CSAP 2004 goal for the middle level subgroup of Students with Disabilities. Actual achievement was 62.09% partially proficient, proficient, and advanced. To reach the 2005 benchmark of 80.21%, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 18.12% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above.
B. Other District Goals

2003-04 Update Goal

1. Goal #1: The 2004 district goal is to achieve one year's growth in one year's time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP.

2. Goal #2: District-wide, 53% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT test administered to 3rd and 5th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP reading exam. The goal for 2004 is to increase the percentage from 53% to 63%.

3. Goal #3: The goal for students with disabilities at the elementary level is to reduce the 26.7% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 20% by 2004; at the high school level, to reduce the 30.9% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 23.9% by 2004.

4. Goal #4: The district goal for the Limited English Proficient subgroup is to increase by 5% the number of students scoring proficient or advanced at each level: from 30.7% to 35.7% at elementary; from 18.7% to 23.7% at middle; and from 15.5% to 20.5% at high school by 2004.

2004-05 Update Goal

1. Goal #1: The 2005 district goal is to achieve one year's growth in one year's time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP. In 2004, allowing a variance of 3% of 7 matched student cohort groups made one or more year's growth as evidenced by sustaining or improving their percentage of proficient or above on CSAP.

2. Goal #2: In 2004, 55% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT tests administered to 3rd graders scored Advanced on the CSAP reading exam. The goal for 2005 is to continue the goal of having 63% of the students scoring at the 96th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT test administered to 3rd graders score Advanced on the CSAP reading exam.

In 2004, 67% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP reading exam. The goal for 2005 is to continue the same goal of having 65% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders score Advanced on the CSAP reading exam.

3. Goal #3: The goal for students with disabilities at the elementary level is to reduce the 23.67% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 17.3% by 2005; at the high school level, to reduce the 21% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 15.26% by 2005.
4. **Goal #4** The 2003-2004 goal to increase proficient or advanced performance of Limited English Proficient students by 5% at each level was achieved at elementary and high school but not at middle level. Elementary achieved 37.5%, middle level 23%, and high school 30.7%. The goal for 2004-2005 is to increase performance of this subgroup by an additional 5% at elementary and high school and 5.7% at middle level; new targets are elementary 42.5%, middle 28.7%, high school 35.5%.

II. **Analysis of Data and Description of Action Priorities for 2004-2005**

A. **AYP Goals**

1. **Subgroup: Students with Disabilities.** To reach the 2005 benchmark of 80.21% for students at middle school, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 18.12% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above.

   a. **Analyze Data**

   Analysis of CSAP scores using a cohort of students with disabilities study approach for students in middle school indicates that students tend to lose ground in 6th and 7th grades and regain ground in reading in 8th grade. The most significant loss is at grade 7. This pattern is similar to that for the overall middle school population. While the transition from elementary school to middle school could negatively affect student performance, it would not be expected that this factor would be significant after an initial adjustment period.

   As part of the 2003-2004 action priorities in this area, special education staff began to explore research-based instructional practices in teaching students with disabilities, and improvements in student learning have been observed in classroom work. Continued work in this area is clearly important. In addition, while these strategies have been applied in classroom work, students may not have had sufficient practice and support in applying strategies in a test-taking format. This may have negatively impacted their CSAP performance. Further study is also needed about the performance pattern in middle school to determine if there are program issues in need of attention.

   An important recognition is that this subgroup of students includes a wide range of disabilities and functioning levels. The instructional emphasis is on access to grade level curriculum through making appropriate adaptations to learner objectives. This approach meets student needs, but may result in learning experiences not completely matched to CSAP expectations for some students. A powerful strategy to impact student learning is to clearly identify learning goals and track student progress so that effective instructional focus can be planned. Special education staff are making this a high priority.

   In reviewing student performance on the standards and subcontent areas of CSAP reading, the span of performance is not significantly great among the standards. However, the area where students tended to display more difficulty is on standard six: Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. At the middle level, this standard requires students to read and respond to various kinds of literature and apply inferential thinking in order to understand different points of view, apply knowledge of literary techniques to understand text, and compare the diverse voices of our national experience. Given that instructional focus with
students with disabilities is often on developing foundational reading comprehension strategies, an area where they score more strongly on CSAP, it is not surprising that the sophistication of standard six would be more difficult. The challenge for special education staff is to identify those students for whom standard six is an appropriate target and provide differentiated instruction and support systems that improve their skills in these areas.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning objectives so that progress toward closing the learning gap can be increased by focusing instruction on critical objectives.
- Continue staff development for special education staff on proven strategies for instruction to students demonstrating below grade level skills and tracking and reporting student progress; include application of strategies in the classroom and in a test-taking format in those sessions.
- Continue and expand staff development on differentiation of instructional approaches and include strategies for teaching inferential literacy skills.
- Continue committee work on exploration of alternative special education delivery models and practices with an emphasis on increasing effective collaboration between general education and special education staff; include study of middle level program as a special focus area.
- If district budget permits, implement recommendations made by Grades 4-8 Literacy Committee for increased literacy support that includes materials and staffing for intervention with neediest students.
- Provide extended learning opportunities at each middle school site for up to 20 struggling students through partnership with Arapahoe Community College.
- Continue instructional Coach and other district support systems to teachers working with at-risk learners.
- Continue to provide support and encouragement to schools in monitoring student progress toward achieving learning goals.

B. Other District Goals

1. Goal #1: The 2005 district goal is to achieve one year’s growth in one year’s time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP.

a. Analyze Data
In order to monitor one year’s growth in one year’s time, the CSAP results for the same students were compared from one year to the next. Matched cohort results were defined by comparing the reading results for the same LPS students as they moved from grade 3 to 4, 4 to 5, etc. from 2003 to 2004 CSAP testing. The following chart shows the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced on the CSAP reading exam.
Results of this first year of using matched cohort student data show a fluctuation of increases and decreases in percent proficient and advanced. Substandard analyses for these cohort groups indicates decreases greater than three percentage points in reading comprehension from third to fourth, sixth to seventh, and ninth to tenth grades. The cohort group of ninth to tenth graders was the only one to register a greater than three point decrease in the thinking skills substandard, while both the ninth to tenth and the sixth to seventh cohort groups show marked decreases in the use of literacy information and the literature subcontent standards.

A multiple year analysis was conducted to determine if these cohort trends were reflected in past years. Although cohort comparisons for previous years are not matched comparisons, in that they do not measure progress for exactly the same students, comparisons at the district and state level are worth noting. At the elementary level, this pattern persists at most schools from 1996 to 2004, yielding six years of comparative data. It should be noted, however, that for sites, progress from third to fourth grade was consistent or increased at least half of the time. The state comparison indicates that the decrease in performance is consistent for all six years. This state pattern persists at the middle school level and is reflected in three out of the four middle schools in LPS. At one site, however, increases from 6th to 7th grade were recorded for two out of the three years for which data are available. The state record of high school performance from 9th to 10th grade shows even progress. At two of the three LPS high schools this trend is replicated for two out of the three years for which data are available. In conclusion, while a downward performance trend does exist from 3rd to 4th, 6th to 7th, and 9th to 10th at the state and district levels to a considerable degree, at some sites for some years, this trend has been reversed. It is important to learn more about why this occurs.
CSAP item map analysis offers some additional information about student progress, or lack thereof, at these cohort connections. One obvious difference is in the increase in number of subcontent areas assessed between third and fourth grade. The difficulty of the reading skills in each subcontent area remains consistent until 7th grade, when increases can be seen. For example, at the 6th grade level, students are expected to infer using context clues, while on the 7th grade CSAP, they are expected to infer by making connections between separated sections of a text. The same increase in difficulty occurs when examining the reading frameworks and item maps for grades nine and ten. In 9th grade, for example, students must use reading and writing skills to solve problems, list possible solutions, and provide support for the solutions (standard 4b). It would seem that at least one explanation for the decreases in student cohort performance from grades three to four, six to seven, and nine to ten can be attributed to the substantial increase in difficulty of the reading skills being assessed.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Study CSAP item maps and assessment frameworks to determine the reading skills being assessed at the cognitive levels at which mastery is expected; align the results of that study to district language arts curriculum and to instructional practices; attend to not only the content of the skill being assessed, but also to the format of the assessment.
- Continue the Early Intervention Program for grades K-3
- Budget permitting, implement the recommendations of the Grades 4-8 Literacy Committee.
- Extend support to classroom teachers across content areas from instructional coaches and other district personnel for implementing effective reading instruction practices.
- Monitor the implementation of the revised language arts curriculum.
- Provide district support for staff development in the administration and analysis of formal and informal assessments in reading.
- Provide district support for staff development in the setting of learning goals and the tracking of progress in reading.
- Continue to provide support and encouragement to schools in monitoring student progress toward achieving learning goals.
- Provide extended learning opportunities at each middle school for up to 20 struggling students through partnership with Arapahoe Community College.

2. Goal #2: In 2004, 55% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CoqAT tests administered to 6th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP reading exam. The goal for 2006 is to continue the goal of having 63% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CoqAT test administered to 5th graders score Advanced on the CSAP reading exam.

In 2004, 57% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CoqAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the
CSAP reading exam. The goal for 2005 is to continue the same goal of having 65% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the verbal section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders score Advanced on the CSAP reading exam.

a. Analyze Data

Performance of high ability students on the reading CSAP has historically never matched performance of high ability students on the CSAP math. At many sites, 90% or more of the students who score at the 95th percentile and above on the math CogAT also score at the advanced level on the math CSAP. This same pattern does not hold true for performance of this highly able group on the reading CSAP. A number of reasons compete for attention and possible explanation. Students have historically been ability grouped in math from grade four through middle school at most sites. Similar ability grouping in reading has only been recently extended to grades four and five and does not typically occur in middle school. In addition, intermediate and middle school teachers acknowledge the need for staff development in reading to increase their depth of understanding about strategies for teaching higher level comprehension skills and for using informal, diagnostic assessments such as running records. Vocabulary acquisition has been assumed for this group of learners due to their tendency to read independently. However, without explicit instruction to foster vocabulary development, highly able readers will not automatically expand their reading and written word banks in either fiction or nonfiction texts. Finally, even with the implementation of critical thinking instructional frameworks such as the Socratic seminar, the student mode of response is typically oral. Students have not had sufficient opportunity to demonstrate high levels of comprehension through written response mediated and improved through feedback from the teacher.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Provide professional development to district staff in the following areas:
  - Differentiation of reading instruction for high ability learners through small group arrangements at the instructional level of these learners
  - Use of challenging materials such as the William and Mary or Junior Great Books selections
  - Balancing oral discussion with written responses accompanied by feedback from the teacher and the requirement to revise and resubmit responses
  - Explicit teaching of vocabulary across content areas using nonlinguistic representation strategies
  - Comprehension and vocabulary acquisition strategies for use in intermediate and middle level classrooms

3. Goal #3: The goal for students with disabilities at the elementary level is to reduce the 23.67% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 17.3% by 2004; at the high school level, to reduce the 21% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 16.29% by 2004.
a. Analyze Data

Elementary: When considering performance of 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students with disabilities, the percent unsatisfactory in 2004 was reduced to 23.67%, a reduction of 3.03%. To achieve the district goal, the reduction would have needed to be 6.7%. It is important to note, however, that this category achieved the "safe harbor" status by exceeding the state required reduction in the unsatisfactory category by 10%, which was 2.67%. When considering the expected achievement for the 2005 proficiency targets, the number of students in the unsatisfactory category will need to be reduced to 17.3%.

High School: When considering the performance of 9th and 10th grade students with disabilities, the percent unsatisfactory in 2004 was reduced to 21%, exceeding the goal of 23.9% by 2.9%. This also exceeded the state "safe harbor" calculation of a 10% reduction by 6%. When considering the expected achievement for the 2005 proficiency targets, the number of students in the unsatisfactory category will need to be reduced to 15.26%.

In examining the performance of students on the reading subcontent areas, elementary students with disabilities did not demonstrate a marked difference in their levels of proficiency across the four standards measured. As there was a range of only 6% from the highest to lowest area, and there was no consistency across the grade levels, there are no identifiable areas of greater strength or weakness. At the high school level the range of differences is slightly greater with a span of 8-10% in grades 9 and 10. However, the highest and lowest areas are not the same in each year and therefore, general conclusions are difficult to make.

Other educational factors may be contributing to improvement of literacy skills at the elementary and high school levels. At elementary, the typical period when students are identified for special education services, the required identification formula is based upon a "wait to fail" model. Students are not eligible for support services unless they have fallen considerably below grade level. Consequently, once students are enrolled in special education, they are already in need of significant remediation of basic skills, while also needing to work on grade level curriculum. The current organization of instructional time may not be sufficient to meet this level of need.

At the high school level, students often have been receiving special education services for a period of time, but have difficulty in keeping up with the reading levels and pace of a rapidly accelerating curve of content/course expectations. Sophisticated vocabulary and language usage present challenges to students with disabilities in reading as they attempt to construct meaning from textbooks and assigned reading. Some students have not acquired the foundational knowledge in a content area that sets the stage for success in applying reading strategies. There may not be a strong enough support system for the learning demands.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning objectives so that progress toward closing the learning gap can be increased by focusing instruction on critical objectives.
• Continue staff development for special education staff on proven strategies for instruction to students demonstrating below grade level skills and tracking and reporting student progress; include application of strategies in a test-taking format in those sessions.

• Continue and expand staff development on differentiation of instructional approaches and include strategies for teaching literacy skills.

• Continue committee work on exploration of alternative special education delivery models and practices with an emphasis on increasing effective collaboration of general education and special education staff.

• Support collaboration of special education and general education staff for effective use of instructional time to expand reading instruction for students.

• Explore elements of an effective literacy plan for students with disabilities that may include early literacy intervention approaches for elementary students.

• Provide staff development for secondary level special education staff on identifying essential knowledge base needed for students to meet reading expectations for content courses and how to differentiate that content appropriately.

• Continue Instructional Coach and other district support systems for teachers working with at-risk learners.

4. Goal #4: The goal for 2004-2005 is to increase performance of Limited English Proficient students by an additional 5% at elementary and high school, and 5.7% at middle level; new targets are elementary 42.5%, middle 28.7%, high school 35.5%.

a. Analyze Data

Performance of Limited English Proficient students in reading is somewhat similar to that of students with disabilities in that they demonstrated the most difficulty in the middle school years. The general pattern is a drop in performance moving from 3rd to 4th grade when the CSAP standards assessed increase from one to four, then a strong recovery in grade 5. This pattern is also typical of the overall scores across the district for all groups. Performance then declines at 6th and 7th with improvement in 8th grade. At high school level the students show improved performance. The gap between the performance of ELL students and overall district performance on CSAP is approximately 50% at the elementary level, 54% at middle school, and 44% at high school.

Vocabulary skills continue to significantly influence students' performance in reading, particularly academic content vocabulary. This is clearly the area of greatest difficulty for high school students. ELL students at middle level also demonstrate difficulty with literature and poetry, and elementary students with literature and thinking skills.

b. Describe Action Priorities

• Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning objectives so that progress toward closing the learning gap can be increased by focusing instruction on critical objectives.
• Continue reading instruction with an emphasis on vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

• Expand staff development for district teachers on how to implement a systematic approach to vocabulary that includes a focus on essential words, taught with research-based strategies that move students beyond memorizing definitions.

• If district budget permits, implement recommendations made by the Grades 4-8 Literacy Committee for increased literacy support that includes materials and staffing for intervention with the neediest students at those levels.

• Support collaboration of ESL and general education staff in planning effective instructional support to English Language Learners.

• At elementary level, implement the following:
  - Provide sheltered English training for classroom/reading teachers
  - Use leveled materials written with ELL students in mind
  - Collect and analyze data on ELL summer school to determine impact and potential needs for change
  - Use Options/LHS student volunteers to support ELL students in reading

• At secondary level, implement the following
  - Provide a class in decoding skills at ESL sites
  - Provide sheltered English training for Language Arts and Reading teachers
  - Use reading placement tests with follow-up high interest-low vocabulary series and chapter books
  - Collect and analyze data on ELL summer school to determine impact and potential needs for change

• Continue Instructional Coach and other district support systems to teachers working with at-risk learners.
I. Performance Goals

A. AYP Goals

NA

B. Other District Goals

2003-04 Update Goal

1. Goal #1: To improve the average performance of our students in writing by more than one year's growth in one year's time on the writing portion of the CSAP by 2004.

2. Goal #2: To increase the percentage of male students district-wide performing at proficient or above on the CSAP writing test in 2004 from 62% to 74% while at the same time sustaining the performance of our female students.

2004-05 Update Goal

1. Goal #1: To improve the average performance of our students in writing by more than one year's growth in one year's time on the writing portion of the CSAP by 2005.

2. Goal #2: To increase the percentage of male students district-wide performing at proficient or above on the CSAP writing test in 2005 from 60% in 2004 to 74% while at the same time sustaining the 75% proficient or above performance of our female students.

II. Analysis of Data and Description of Action Priorities for 2003-2004

A. AYP Goals

NA

B. Other District Goals

1. Goal #1: To improve the average performance of our students in writing by more than one year's growth in one year's time on the writing portion of the CSAP by 2004.

a. Analyze Data

While LPS students generally continue to perform at higher levels than students in Colorado and across the nation, areas of continuing need for improvement are evident. Using an acceptable variance of 3%, a review of matched cohorts for spring 2003 and spring 2004 testing indicates that most grade levels attained or exceeded one year's growth in one year's time. Sixth graders moving to 7th grade,
and 7th graders moving to 8th grade did not meet this standard for growth. Since the spring 2004 performance of these groups of students is lower than in past years, the results warrant a watchful eye and a trend analysis with further data. Additionally, at least a third of our students continue to struggle in each of the subcontent areas. Extended writing and mechanics seem to be the most troublesome for our students. The chart below illustrates the matched cohort group performance profile for the writing CSAP exam.

| Group #1 | 2003 Grade 3 70% | 2004 Grade 4 69% | Decrease of 1% |
| Group #2 | 2003 Grade 4 66% | 2004 Grade 5 71% | Increase of 2% |
| Group #3 | 2003 Grade 5 69% | 2004 Grade 6 67% | Decrease of 2% |
| Group #4 | 2003 Grade 6 70% | 2004 Grade 7 63% | Decrease of 7% |
| Group #5 | 2003 Grade 7 70% | 2004 Grade 8 63% | Decrease of 7% |
| Group #6 | 2003 Grade 8 64% | 2004 Grade 9 72% | Increase 8% |
| Group #7 | 2003 Grade 9 72% | 2004 Grade 10 71% | Decrease of 1% |

While there is no totally consistent practice across our schools, in recent years we have acquired greater knowledge about effective strategies to build and measure quality writing, and schools are focusing in those areas. Some of our schools have been particularly successful in improving their students' writing scores. Additionally, while some subgroups of students are not attaining proficiency at the desired pace, a significant percentage are no longer at the unsatisfactory level, but at a partially proficient level, which is evidence of some progress. Another factor to be considered in analyzing the overall writing performance scores is the gender discrepancy between the scores of males and females on CSAP writing. Male students score considerably lower than their female counterparts. This issue is addressed in the writing Goal #2.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Analyze the work of those schools that have shown significant improvement in CSAP writing scores and disseminate the insights gained to other district schools.
- Begin discussions with secondary principals on the potential value of increasing the incentive for students to give their best on the CSAP writing test.
- Continue to provide formal and ongoing staff development in exemplary writing processes, such as formal feedback, conferencing, and rubric development.
- Encourage additional data analysis at the school level related to skill deficiencies of partially proficient writers.
- Work with schools in defining and implementing a process for regular review of student writing.
- Continue to provide support and encouragement to schools in monitoring student progress toward achieving learning goals.
Focus on a district-wide ethic of high and progressive expectations related to student writing at each grade level.

2. **Goal #2:** To increase the percentage of male students district-wide performing at proficient or above on the CSAP writing test in 2005 from 60% to 74% while at the same time sustaining the performance of our female students.

   a. **Analyze Data**

   *Characteristics of assessment.* The writing portion of the CSAP requires that the student both write and edit. All grade levels must write paragraphs and edit for grammar and mechanics. After grade 3, students must also produce a longer piece under the heading of “extended writing.” The discrepancy between boys’ and girls’ scores is large across grade levels and across subcontent areas. Although some of the writing prompts seem more “girl-friendly,” the consistency of the discrepancy suggests that it is not just the prompts that account for the differences in the scores.

   Although the prompts do not seem to account for such a large discrepancy in writing performance, the fact that boys do somewhat, but not dramatically, less well on the English subtest of the ACT does make one wonder about the writing that is required on the CSAP.

   *Characteristics of the students.* For many years there has been a district-wide, state-wide, and even a global trend in standardized tests indicating that males are not performing as well as females in the areas of writing and reading. The following charts of LPS CSAP data disaggregated by gender and by level demonstrate this pattern.

<p>| 2004 LPS Writing CSAP Results—Proficient and Above |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| <strong>Writing Grade 3</strong>             |        |        |
| SA 5 – Paragraph Writing        | 67%    | 76%    |
| SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage          | 64%    | 69%    |
| SA 8 – Mechanics                | 65%    | 71%    |
| <strong>Writing Grade 4</strong>             |        |        |
| SA 5 – Paragraph Writing        | 59%    | 74%    |
| SA 6 – Extended Writing         | 70%    | 74%    |
| SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage          | 66%    | 76%    |
| SA 8 – Mechanics                | 59%    | 68%    |
| <strong>Writing Grade 5</strong>             |        |        |
| SA 5 – Paragraph Writing        | 60%    | 76%    |
| SA 6 – Extended Writing         | 60%    | 80%    |
| SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage          | 66%    | 77%    |
| SA 8 – Mechanics                | 65%    | 76%    |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Grade 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA 5 – Paragraph Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 6 – Extended Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 8 – Mechanics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Grade 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA 5 – Paragraph Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 6 – Extended Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 8 – Mechanics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Grade 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA 5 – Paragraph Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 6 – Extended Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 8 – Mechanics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Grade 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA 5 – Paragraph Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 6 – Extended Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 8 – Mechanics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Grade 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA 5 – Paragraph Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 6 – Extended Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 7 – Grammar &amp; Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA 8 – Mechanics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been much speculation about the reasons for these male/female differences, but some educators have concluded that males do not enjoy the types of reading and writing typically required in classrooms and on standardized tests, and therefore do not fully engage in the writing response. Without creating stereotypes, we observe that males show a tendency to do better on writing that is short and information-oriented. Even though some of the writing required on the tests allows for this style, much of the writing assigned in schools requires longer passages. This could lead to boys engaging in writing less often, thus not improving as much as girls. In addition, it is possible that boys’ overall lower performance in the areas of writing could indicate that they do not consider writing to be “something boys do”—also contributing to less engagement in writing activities and to a reluctance to do their best in testing situations like CSAP.

Finally, many educators observe that boys are less compliant and not as devoted to their teachers and schools as are girls. When boys realize that the CSAP does not influence their own grades, and really is used to reflect on the teacher and the school, they might be less willing to take it seriously.

Characteristics of learning experiences. As stated above, it is possible that the writing students are asked to do in school is perceived by boys as more “girl oriented.” They might hear that it is often praised when it is detailed and emotions
are shared. If boys’ perceptions are, in fact, that writing in classrooms is not masculine, they may tend to write less and to disengage during writing instruction.

In order to improve something as complex as writing, students must receive feedback and then use that feedback to improve their work. The poor performance of boys might indicate that they are not receiving the feedback, or are not using that feedback, to revise and improve their work. It is possible that girls are more comfortable with classroom writing assignments and, when they do not receive feedback, it is not as damaging as when boys do not receive appropriate feedback. In addition, it is possible that feedback on writing is more about adding details and emoting, feedback that boys might be less likely to use to revise their writing.

Characteristics of school. Research indicates that when schools clearly state writing as a high priority goal, and then track students’ performance on writing, performance is enhanced. It is important to regularly assess writing, school-wide, and then make necessary adjustments in the students learning experiences to provide targeted instruction. Schools throughout the district are moving in this direction. Attempts are being made to identify groups of students, such as males, and individual students who are struggling so that adjustments can be made in the area of writing instruction. It is likely that as these efforts become a regular part of the school culture, writing will improve for both males and females.

b. Describe Action Priorities

• Continue to encourage schools to assess, track, and respond to classroom data related to writing performance.

• Engage in collection of attitudinal data to determine if male attitudes – both toward writing and toward CSAP – might be influencing their progress in writing.

• Continue to provide principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches with presentations that heighten their awareness of the writing deficiencies among males; gather information and provide ideas and resources that might help improve performance, e.g., making sure students are receiving feedback on their writing, and making sure that writing assignments encourage boys to write.

• Provide very specific recommendations for using nonlinguistic approaches to improve writing.

• Offer classes to teachers to improve writing instruction and to ensure these classes include strategies to help boys write better.

• Alan November will be in the district in January. We are asking him to include in his presentation specific recommendations for enhancing writing. This technology link could help us to gain boys’ interest in writing.

• Provide opportunities for sharing from teachers and schools that are making writing gains—in K-12 Leadership meetings, assistant principals training, and instructional coaches training.
PERFORMANCE GOALS, ANALYSIS OF DATA, AND ACTION PRIORITIES FOR 2004
MATH

I. Performance Goals

A. 2003-04 AYP Goals

1. Yes: The District met state 2003 AYP goals for elementary, middle, and high school populations. Goals were met for subgroups of Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, White, and Students with Disabilities at the elementary level; and for the subgroups Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, White, and Limited English Proficient at middle school and high school. The goal for 2004 is to sustain or improve performance in these areas.

2. No: The 2003 AYP goals were not achieved for the middle and high school levels for the subgroup of Students with Disabilities. The goal for 2004 is to increase middle level math performance of 50% partially proficient, proficient, or advanced by 9.51% to reach the state AYP benchmark of 59.57%, to increase high school level performance of 25.34% by 17.68% to reach the state AYP benchmark of 47%.

2004-05 AYP Update Goal

1. Yes: The district met 2004 AYP goals for all subgroups with the exception of Students with Disabilities in middle level and high school. As shown in the following table, the district currently meets or exceeds 2005 AYP performance targets in elementary in all subgroups except Students with Disabilities. At middle level and high school the district currently would not meet the 2005 performance targets for all subgroups with the exception of Asian and White. The goal for 2004-2005 is to sustain or improve performance of all subgroups to meet the new targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Am In</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>Econ Disadv</th>
<th>Stiffs w/Dis</th>
<th>2004 Target</th>
<th>2005 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elem</td>
<td>95.91</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>92.47</td>
<td>98.18</td>
<td>91.67</td>
<td>91.23</td>
<td>77.61</td>
<td>75.86</td>
<td>81.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>93.24</td>
<td>62.96</td>
<td>67.07</td>
<td>88.67</td>
<td>61.67</td>
<td>65.50</td>
<td>47.46</td>
<td>59.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>79.56</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>51.49</td>
<td>61.55</td>
<td>58.67</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>32.63</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>60.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. No: The district did not meet the 2004 CSAP goal for the middle and high school level subgroup of Students with Disabilities. Actual achievement for the middle school level was 47.40% partially proficient, proficient and advanced. To reach the 2005 benchmark of 59.63%, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 22.17% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above. Actual achievement for the high school level was 32.63% partially proficient, proficient and advanced.
To reach the 2005 benchmark of 60.25%, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 27.62% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above.

B. Other District Goals

2003-2004 Update Goals

1. Goal #1: The 2004 district goal is to achieve one year's growth in one year's time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP.

2. Goal #2:
District-wide, 83% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 5th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2004 is to increase the percentage from 83% to 90%.

District-wide, 74% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2004 is to increase the percentage from 74% to 81%.

3. Goal #3: The goal for Students with Disabilities at elementary level is to reduce the 31.54% of students in the unsatisfactory category to 24.54% in 2004.

4. Goal #4: The district goal for the Limited English Proficient subgroup is to increase by 10%, the number of students scoring proficient or advanced at each level: from 31% to 41% at elementary; 13.7% to 23.7% at middle, and 2.5% to 12.5% at high school by 2004.

2004-05 Update Goals

1. Goal #1: Not all cohort groups achieved one year's growth in one year's time. The 2004 district goal will remain the same, to achieve one year's growth in one year's time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP.

2. Goal #2:
In 2004, 31% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 5th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2005 is to sustain or improve that level of performance.

In 2004, 71% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2005 is to maintain the same goal of having 81% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam.

3. Goal #3: In 2004, this goal was not as the percentage of the Students with Disabilities at elementary level scoring in the unsatisfactory category was reduced to 21%. The goal for 2005 is to meet the new AYP target with 18.1% or fewer of the Students with Disabilities at elementary level scoring in the unsatisfactory category.
4. Goal #4: The goal for ELI students was not met. At the elementary level, 35% scored proficient or advanced; at the middle level, 18% scored proficient or advanced; at the high school level, 10% scored proficient or advanced. Therefore, the goal for this update is as follows: The district goal for the Limited English Proficient subgroup is to increase by 10% the number of students scoring proficient or advanced at each level. From 35% to 45% at elementary, from 18% to 28% at middle, from 10% to 20% at high school by 2005.

II. Analysis of Data and Description of Action Priorities for 2004-2005

A. AYP Goals

1. Subgroup: Students with Disabilities

Middle School Level

To reach the 2005 benchmark of 69.63% for Students with Disabilities at the middle school level, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 22.17% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above.

High School Level

To reach the 2005 benchmark of 60.25% for Students with Disabilities at the high school level, the goal for this subgroup is to increase by 27.62% the number of students scoring partially proficient or above.

a. Analyze Data

CSAP mathematics test results for middle and high school Students with Disabilities demonstrate a fairly consistent pattern of performing approximately 40% below the LPS overall score at each level. The overall score for LPS students at the middle level was 67% partially proficient or above, yet only 48% of the middle school Students with Disabilities achieved this target. The overall score at the high school level was 80% partially proficient or above, yet only 33% of the high school Students with Disabilities achieved this target.

At 7th grade there is a distinct drop in achievement. Another significant drop in achievement occurs in grade 10. In reviewing student performance in four of the math content standards areas for grades 6 through 10 on the 2004 CSAP mathematics test, the data suggest that with each succeeding grade level the standards become more difficult for Students with Disabilities. The item maps for the 7th and 10th grade assessments indicate an increase in emphasis on conceptual understanding as the tests increase in difficulty. Specifically, mathematical reasoning, communication, and problem-solving are increasingly required at the partially proficient, proficient, and advanced performance levels. Students are asked to represent numbers or apply information from a table or graph in order to solve mathematical problems. On the tenth grade test, a greater number of test questions are related to algebra, probability/statistics, and geometry than the other standards. A total of 62% of the constructed response items, or questions that require a student-generated written answer, relate to these three standards.

Review of the CSAP assessment frameworks and released test items indicate that the CSAP mathematics assessment attempts to measure more complex conceptual understandings at succeeding grade levels. In reviewing CSAP released items, many CSAP test items are complex constructed response questions where students are
asked to demonstrate not only mathematical skills, but provide reasoning and/or an explanation of their thinking. For example, 53% of the items that tenth grade students must answer correctly to score above the unsatisfactory level are constructed response items related to algebra, probability/statistics, and geometry. Given the range of disabilities of students in this subgroup, there may be a mismatch of appropriate instructional levele to CSAP expectations. While focusing instruction toward more complex conceptual understandings of mathematics is an emphasis, it is still likely that the exposure of Students with Disabilities to algebra, probability/statistics, or geometry may not provide sufficient experience to prepare them for the CSAP test.

These data reflect the challenge in maintaining a close alignment between the concepts being assessed on the CSAP mathematics tests, especially at grades 7 through 10, while offering a variety of math courses in the middle and high school math curricula. A value in LPS has been to offer choice and variety for students. The fact that all ninth and tenth grade students must take one CSAP mathematics test raises the question about the value of course choice versus an emphasis on preparation for a single math test.

In determining action steps, it should be noted that each student's progress in this subgroup is tracked through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and typically, progress is made on annual goals. However, IEP goals are usually based on the student's developmental status rather than based on grade-level curriculum objectives. At the high school level, Students with Disabilities are often placed in basic skills classes that may not include the same content as measured by CSAP. Because of the need to build students' background knowledge and skill in mathematics, there tends to be less instructional time focused on the more complex understandings being assessed on the CSAP mathematics test, and, therefore, students may not get sufficient practice in math reasoning and/or writing explanations for their mathematical thinking when solving mathematics problems. Consequently, when responding to CSAP test items, students may be encountering material for which they have not received instruction nor sufficient exposure or practice.

Gaps in instruction may occur due to both placement of students in classes that best meet their developmental level, and due to the expanded number of options that all high school students face when choosing math courses. When course selection is compared to more limited CSAP expectations, the gaps in instruction versus testing have a propensity to grow over time and may be a significant factor in CSAP test results for Students with Disabilities, as well as for all high school math students.

b. Description of Action Priorities

- Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning objectives so that progress toward closing the learning gap can be increased by focusing instruction on critical objectives.
- Continue staff development for special education staff on proven strategies for mathematics instruction with emphasis on the need for students to explain their answers when providing mathematics instruction.
- District staff development will emphasize strategies to improve math vocabulary using Marzano’s list of critical math vocabulary as one resource.
- The district disaggregation subcommittee will continue to investigate areas of discrepant performance, potential reasons, and recommend responses.
Littleton Public Schools
District Improvement Plan
November 2004

- Continue the exploration of alternative special education delivery models and practices, including models of effective collaboration with general education staff to maximize instructional time for students with Disabilities.
- Continue Instructional Coach and other district support systems to teachers for emphasize the need for all students, including Students with Disabilities, to explain their answers when providing mathematics instruction.
- As part of the curriculum revision process, the LPS math curriculum will be revised to emphasize both math skills and complex conceptual understandings of mathematics at every grade level.
- If district budget permits, design and implement a math support and intervention system for students who demonstrate significant gaps in math knowledge and skills.

B. Other District Goals

1. Goal #1: The 2005 district goal is to achieve one year's growth in one year's time for the total population as demonstrated by cohort group performance of proficient or advanced on CSAP.

   a. Analyze Data

   In order to monitor one year's growth in one year's time, the CSAP results for the same students were compared from one year to the next. Matched cohort results were defined by comparing the same LPS students as they moved from grade 3 to 4, 4 to 5, etc. from 2003 to 2004 CSAP testing. The following chart displays the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced in math:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group #1</th>
<th>Group #2</th>
<th>Group #3</th>
<th>Group #4</th>
<th>Group #5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Grade 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>Grade 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decrease of 3%</td>
<td>Decrease of 12%</td>
<td>Decrease of 7%</td>
<td>Decrease of 7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   These data reflect a comparison of matched cohorts, meaning that precisely the same students were compared from one year to the next. All five cohort groups showed a decline from one grade level to the next, however the drop for the 5th grade cohort was only 3% and for the 7th grade cohort was only 1%. Allowing a variance of 3%, these two matched student cohorts made one or more year's growth as evidenced by sustaining or improving their percentage of proficient or higher on CSAP. Therefore, three out of five of the cohort groups appear to have declined in math achievement. It will remain important to monitor matched cohorts in future years in order to determine if these declines represent actual performance trends.

   Initial comparison of LPS math curriculum and the CSAP assessment frameworks indicates a mismatch between the content in the curriculum and the concepts being tested. For example, problem solving using rational numbers, integers,
exponents is emphasized on the 7th grade CSAP, but is not a target in the 7th grade math curriculum. Misalignment between the LPS curriculum and the CSAP assessment frameworks must be resolved. As was noted in the analysis of the AYP math goal, 53% of the items that tenth grade students must answer correctly to score above the unsatisfactory level are constructed response items related to algebra, probability/statistics, and geometry.

Review of the CSAP assessment frameworks and released test items indicate that the CSAP mathematics assessment measures more complex conceptual understandings at succeeding grade levels. In reviewing CSAP released items, many CSAP test items are complex constructed response questions, where students are asked to demonstrate not only mathematical skills, but provide reasoning and/or an explanation of their thinking. These items reflect an emphasis on process standards that increase conceptual understanding in problem solving, communication, reasoning, connections, and application of math skills.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- The District math curriculum will be reviewed and revised to align with state math assessment frameworks. This will primarily affect the algebra, geometry, and statistics classes. District and high school leadership will address what value the LPS district places on providing opportunities for course choices and impact on timeline for taking math CSAP.
- The math revision in algebra, geometry, and statistics will refer to the assessment frameworks as one of their primary resources for determining alignment of the curriculum with the CSAP test.
- Continue staff development for special education staff on proven strategies for mathematics instruction with emphasis on the need for students to explain their answers when providing mathematics instruction.
- District staff development will emphasize strategies to improve math vocabulary using Marzano's list of critical math vocabulary as one resource.
- Collect matched cohort data for the 2004 and 2005 math CSAP tests and compare the results to determine if declines from 2003 to 2004 represent actual performance trends.
- Use the pilot of electronic testing (Scantron) to evaluate the success of students in classes that emphasize conceptual understanding through problem solving, communication, reasoning, connections, and application of math skills. Measure the progress of selected students in Everyday Math and IMP classes. Compare their results to students in other math classes.
- If district budget permits, design and implement a math support and intervention system for students who demonstrate significant gaps in math knowledge and skills.

2. Goal #2:

In 2004, 91% of the students scoring at the 95th percentile and above on the quantitative section of theCogAT test administered to 5th graders scored Advanced
on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2005 is to sustain or improve that level of performance.

In 2004, 71% of the students scoring at the 90th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam. The goal for 2005 is to maintain the same goal of having 81% of the students scoring at the 90th percentile and above on the quantitative section of the CogAT test administered to 7th graders scored Advanced on the CSAP math exam.

a. Data Analysis

The components on the 7th grade CSAP math test were reviewed to better understand what skills and knowledge students at this grade level had to demonstrate to achieve an advanced score. The 7th grade assessment frameworks and item maps were analyzed. There are 27 possible points a student could earn at the advanced level. Of those items, 63% involved application of math skills on a constructed response item. The items required generating stem and leaf plots, graphs, charts, and scale models. This means that students had to take a concept embedded in a question, apply it to a new math situation and generate a chart, model, or graph to communicate how the concept applied and what the results were. These tasks require demonstration of conceptual understanding through problem solving, communication, reasoning, connections, and application of math skills.

Consideration must be given to current math instructional practices and attention to the development of conceptual understanding in mathematics. Math instruction and practices have often focused on computational skill development. It is evident from the analysis of the advanced items on the 7th grade math CSAP that students must construct models in which to present information and communicate their reasoning in solving problems using that information. This requires increased practice in receiving new information, organizing it mathematically and applying the information to solve a problem. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) has emphasized that the development of conceptual understanding must be embedded in all math instruction.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- Through staff development, encourage the development of higher order thinking skills through instruction and practice in problem solving, communication, reasoning, connections, and application of math skills.
- As part of the curriculum revision process, the LPS math curriculum will be revised to emphasize both basic math skills and complex conceptual understandings of mathematics.
- Provide staff development training to Instructional Coaches and G/T facilitators that focuses on generating graphic representations of mathematical information and writing to communicate mathematical thinking.
- Use the Scantron test pilot to generate performance assessments and rubrics for scoring conceptual understanding. Administer the tests to selected G/T
students in Everyday Math and IMP classes. Compare their results to G/T students
given the same assessments in other math classes
• Use electronic testing to evaluate the success of students in classes that
emphasize conceptual understanding through problem solving, communication,
reasoning, connections and application of math skills. Measure the progress of
selected G/T students in Everyday Math and IMP classes using multiple choice
responses. Compare their results to G/T students given the same assessments in
other math classes.
• If district budget permits, design and implement a math support and
intervention system for students who demonstrate significant gaps in math
knowledge and skills.

3. Goal #3: In 2004 this goal was met as the percentage of the Students with
Disabilities at elementary level scoring in the unsatisfactory category was reduced
to 21%. The goal for 2005 is to meet the new AYP target with 18.1% or fewer of
the Students with Disabilities at elementary level scoring in the unsatisfactory
category.
   a. Analyze Data
   Given that 79% of the elementary Students with Disabilities are scoring partially
proficient or above, the elementary Students with Disabilities exceeded the AYP
target in math of 75.86%. These results are already very near the new math target
of 71.9%. It is also noteworthy that 38% of the elementary Students with
Disabilities obtained scores of either proficient or advanced on the math CSAP,
indicating that the interventions being used with these students are effective.
Action priorities will reflect continued implementation of the same strategies from
the 2003 District Improvement Plan.
   b. Describe Action Priorities
   • Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning
objectives so that progress toward closing the earning gap can be increased by
focusing instruction on critical objectives.
   • District staff development will continue to incorporate an emphasis on math
vocabulary instruction, non-linguistic representation to understand math concepts,
and hands-on approaches to math instruction.
   • Special education staff, in partnership with general education teachers, will be
provided staff development in proven strategies for instruction to students
demonstrating below grade level skills. This partnership will result in effective
collaboration with general education staff to maximize instructional time for
Students with Disabilities.
   • Use support from instructional coaches and other district support systems to
emphasize the need for students to explain their answers
   • CSAP item analyses will be used with schools to identify areas where greater
instructional focus is needed.
   • Continue development work on grade 5 and 6 math assessments to include
expectations for math reasoning and writing.

23
Littleton Public Schools
District Improvement Plan
November 2004

• Provide district level training that emphasizes a balance of skill development with conceptual understanding of mathematics.

4. Goal #4: The goal for ELL students was not met. At the elementary level, 35% scored proficient or advanced; at the middle level, 18% scored proficient or advanced; at the high school level, 10% scored proficient or advanced. Therefore, the goal for this update is as follows: The district goal for the Limited English Proficient subset is to increase by 10% the number of students scoring proficient or advanced at each level, from 35% to 45% at elementary, from 18% to 28% at middle, from 10% to 20% at high school by 2005.

a. Analyze Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students in ELL Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School Level [6th only]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School Level [6th, 7th, &amp; 8th]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Level [9th, &amp; 10th]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2004 Mathematics CSAP Results
At or Above PROFICIENT (by Standards)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students in ELL Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number Sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a significant number of ELL students who did not complete the CSAP mathematics test. Beginning at the elementary level, 19% of the ELL students report “No Score”; at the middle level 20% of the ELL students report “No Score”; and at the high school level 35% of the ELL students report “No Score.” A “No Score” identification indicates that these students either failed to complete the test, became overly frustrated with the test or randomly marked the answers. As previously noted, the CSAP math test requires extensive use of reading and writing skills in order to
respond to test items. The language skills of ELL students hamper their ability to demonstrate math knowledge and skills. Specifically, their difficulty with math vocabulary is likely to negatively impact their performance and increase their frustration level.

As was stated in the analysis of results for Students with Disabilities, in reviewing CSAP released items, many CSAP test items are complex constructed response questions, where students are asked to demonstrate not only mathematical skills, but provide reasoning and/or an explanation of their thinking. For example, 53% of the items that tenth grade students must answer correctly to score above the unsatisfactory level are constructed response items related to algebra, probability/statistics and geometry. Students may have limited exposure to the more complex understandings being assessed on the CSAP mathematics test. Therefore, students may not get sufficient practice in math reasoning and/or writing explanations regarding their mathematical thinking and approach to solving mathematics problems.

b. Describe Action Priorities

- District staff development will emphasize strategies to improve math vocabulary using Marzano’s list of critical math vocabulary as one resource.
- District staff development will continue to incorporate an emphasis on math vocabulary instruction, non-linguistic representation to understand math concepts, and hands-on approaches to math instruction.
- As part of the curriculum revision process, the LPS math curriculum will be revised to include both math skills and complex conceptual understandings of mathematics. It should be noted that materials that may be recommended as part of the curriculum revision process may necessitate a substantial increase in attention to math vocabulary development for ELL students.
- Proceed with district and site work on identifying essential grade level learning objectives so that progress toward closing the learning gap can be increased by focusing instruction on critical objectives.
- Generate a plan for providing math training and support for ELL teachers.
- Generate a plan for providing sheltered English training for IMP teachers.
I. Performance Goal

2003-04 Update Goal

1. Goal #1 District-wide, 75-85% of students will achieve a grade of "C" or better in each subject area.

2004-05 Update Goal

1. Goal #1 District-wide, 75-85% of students will achieve a grade of "C" or better in each subject area.

II. Narrative

At the present time, we are using School Improvement Plans to track the percent of students who are receiving C's or better in the curriculum areas that are not assessed on CSAP. All school sites are either tracking the number of C's or are progressing toward assessment and record-keeping that will provide more accurate records of students who are achieving proficiency for the standards. There are a number of district efforts that support this work at school sites.

First, attempts are being made to help teachers and administrators understand how to track student performance in the classroom. There are classes being offered to both elementary and secondary teachers with a focus on transforming their grading practices in a way that results in more accurate records of students' progress toward achieving important learning goals. The classes not only provide alternative formats for, and perspectives on, grading but also help teachers to begin to establish clearly articulated and consistent criteria when scoring student work. The same information is being shared with principals at K-12 Principals meetings and with the Instructional Coaches during their monthly training sessions.

The result of these district efforts is that there is increasingly more focus—from both teachers and students—on the learning goals being addressed by assignments/assessments instead of on the assignments/assessments themselves. Further, teachers are beginning to have conversations about working together to establish criteria for proficiency and perhaps, eventually, to use common assessments for all learning goals important to the content areas.

Second, there are increasing numbers of individuals, and school sites, that are working to identify content that should be considered "essential." In addition, district curriculum development efforts, particularly this year in mathematics, are also focused on identifying essential knowledge. Through curriculum councils, administrator meetings, and other opportunities for professional dialogue, the message is being communicated that identification of "essential learning" is important in all curriculum areas. As progress is made in the site-based and more district-wide efforts to identify essential learning, tracking students' performance for essential learning goals will become more manageable.
Finally, the district this year has created a task force of teachers and administrators to study the issues and options, and to provide leadership in the area of grading and tracking student performance across all curricular areas and grade levels. One commitment of this task force is to collaborate with the technology department that is presently in the process of selecting a new student information system to assure a match between the philosophy of grading and reporting and the technology system.

The district trainings, focus on essential learnings, and task force are all helping to move the district toward a more accurate, yet feasible, way of tracking student performance in all curricular areas.
A business improvement district (BID) is a defined area within which businesses are required to pay an additional tax (or levy) in order to fund projects within the district's boundaries. The BID is often funded primarily through the levy but can also draw on other public and private funding streams. BIDs may go by other names, such as business improvement area (BIA), business revitalization zone (BRZ), community improvement district (CID), special services area (SSA), or special improvement district. District improvement efforts focus on student needs through a collaborative process involving all stakeholders to establish and address priority needs, district funding, and closing achievement gaps between identified subgroups of students. Additionally, districts build upon their capacity for high-quality planning by making connections between academic resources and available funding to address targeted needs.