

Chapter 4

D. Standard Based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

D1: To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the parents and other shareholders of the community?

Santa Rosa High School uses a variety of assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data. The primary differences in the use of reporting mechanisms, lies in which type -- objective or teacher-generated -- of assessment is reported. The objective tests use a much broader “community-based” mechanism for reporting the results. The teacher-generated tests use a focused student/family oriented reporting mechanism.

Types of Assessments

Objective tests:

- PSAT scores
- ACT scores
- STAR scores
- Prentice Hall Language scores (9th and 10th grade students)
- CAPA scores (SDC students who do not take the CAHSEE or STAR tests)
- CAHSEE tests
- CELDT (ELL students)
- AP tests
- SBE – School-based exams (formerly mandated by the district office)
- SAT scores

Teacher-generated tests:

- Standardized classroom tests
- Teacher written tests
- District Standards Based Exams
- Portfolios / Projects / Performances
- Oral / Written language exams

Non-testing data:

- Attendance
- Free and reduced lunch rates
- Graduation rates
- Drop out rates
- ELL re-designation rates
- Cohort data
- Suspensions and expulsions

D1-A: How are the assessments disaggregated?

Data may be disaggregated by socio-economics, race and ethnicity, gender, grade level, lan-

guage proficiency, and level of parent education. The disaggregation comes from two main sources: The California State Department of Education or the district office. Reporting is done through the district office's Management Information Student Testing Services department, and posted on WebTools and OARS for counselor and faculty perusal.

OARS - Online Assessment Reporting System:

Implemented in 2005-2006, OARS currently reports disaggregated data for: CELDT, STAR, School-Based Exams (district level), CAT-6 (from middle school), CAHSEE and Prentice-Hall language tests. Teachers are able to access data according to many factors including gender, socio-economic status, GATE, RSP, age and ethnicity. Teachers may see how students have previously scored on STAR and CAT 6 assessments, so particular weaknesses/needs can be identified and strategies for remediation applied. Cohort data available from middle school allows proactive planning for incoming classes.

All department chairs have received basic OARS instruction and faculty training has been offered on four occasions.

D1-B: What is/are the method(s) of disaggregation from the state department?

MISTS (Management Information and Student Testing Services) Santa Rosa City School's data processing department:

At the beginning of each school year, the SRCS (Santa Rosa City Schools) MISTS department disaggregates and distributes state department data to respective sites via WebTools and OARS for site, department and teacher analysis. The district compiles a data resource book which is sent to each site administrator.

The state disaggregates STAR and CAHSEE test information data by ethnicity, RSP status, socio-economic status, and gender, etc.

D1-C: Through what process(es) is the data analyzed?

During the initial day of teacher training (beginning of the school year), site administrators present and discuss new data. Throughout the school year, in monthly staff meetings, new data is presented to staff for analysis. The PAC (principal's advisory council) receives and discusses data as received from the district office. Subsequent department meetings evaluate the data. Administrators, if requested and available, attend department meetings to assist with analysis.

CAHSEE data on all juniors and seniors who have not yet passed the tests, is distributed to the affected staff, departments and programs. In department meetings, English, math, social science and science departments, analyze and discuss SBE, STAR/CST and CAHSEE data to see what adjustments can and should be made. Individual faculty members use OARS to determine and address areas of particular weaknesses. Faculty also analyzes state-generated data to prepare for incoming cohorts.

See: Classified and Certificated Survey Questions 46-50 in Appendix

D1-D: How is the data reported to the parents and community stakeholders?

Santa Rosa High School uses a variety of mediums to report data. The *Panther Purr*, (SRHS student/parent newsletter), is sent to every student home bimonthly. This publication contains site test results as well as support information regarding testing is offered in English as well as Spanish. The *Press Democrat*, our local newspaper, publishes API and AYP test results for Santa Rosa City School as well as surrounding districts.

The information is disaggregated by primary or secondary levels, individual school results, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The district's school board meetings are televised on local cable and test results and plans for program improvement are often discussed within these meetings. The SRCS Board of Education meetings are broadcast in English. Data is regularly reported at monthly School Site Council meetings.

CAHSEE test results are sent to all parents/guardians, and ELL parents receive test results for CELDT, SABE, CAHSEE and STAR in Spanish.

Through ELAC (English Learners Advisory Committee), ELL parents and students are made aware of the sub-group areas of concern.

Strengths

- Multiple means to report data
- Strong ELAC committee focused on student issues gleaned from data
- OARS program
- District distribution of assessed information

Supporting Evidence

- *Panther Purr*
- *Press Democrat*
- *San Francisco Chronicle*
- District and school websites
- ArtQuest website
- ArtQuest showcase
- School Site Council minutes
- Booster Clubs
- SRHS Foundation
- Friends of ArtQuest minutes
- Student/Teacher/Parent Association minutes
- ELAC minutes
- Report cards
- IEP documents
- School Accountability Report Cards (SARC)

Key Issues

- Lack of rubric or explanatory key to accompany data means teachers and parents often lack understanding of how to analyze data and implement desirable change
- District and site response to data is slow; STAR and SBE results are not received in time to affect 11th grade test takers
- Sub-group data is disaggregated, but not individual student data, except as available to staff through OARS, or parents through SARC
- Several informational venues for parents are available, and SRHS has been proactive in attempting to contact parents, but more needs to be done to educate the parents and community shareholders about the import of scores
- Mechanisms to elicit parent input and support for data-identified program improvements need implementation
- District needs to provide more planning time for departments to analyze scores and create strategies to address data-identified needs within their subject area
- Attendance reporting to parents needs to be more aggressive. Phone notification as the sole means to report student attendance is not adequate

D2: To what extent do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning?

Teachers use a wide variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning at Santa Rosa High School. Many teachers incorporate a variety of methods to informally assess students' progress. These daily assessments may include skill checks, journal entries, daily questions, quizzes and oral questioning.

Teachers keep records of student achievement through transcripts, grade books, weekly grade checks, computerized grading programs, portfolios and report cards, and daily and weekly progress reports. Few teachers share these results with the school community (other teachers in the department, counselors, parents, RSP/GATE teachers, etc.). Most teachers utilize the data collected over time to alter their teaching methodology. Alterations may include:

- cooperative grouping
- individualized instruction
- frequent review of material
- design of new lessons
- differentiation of tools or strategies to teach material
- increased parent contact
- increased communication with other stakeholders
- increased reflection on teaching practices

After an analysis of CAHSEE scores, tutoring sessions were created for students needing extra help. Data collection from non-core departments (grades, attendance, socio-economic, etc.), is not formally analyzed or integrated with core department data at this time, although student progress in these areas are informally reported and evaluated by faculty.

D2-A: To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the teaching/learning process for the enhancement of the educational progress of every student?

The Assessment and Accountability Student Survey reveals that 97% of students evaluate their learning process. Most students are aware of current grades and regularly monitor their learning.

Approximately 50% of teachers responded to the Assessment and Accountability Faculty Survey. Most teachers (70%) work in departments that tracked the standards taught. About one-third follow a standards-based text, and about 50% have made changes based upon input from tests. Most teachers (60%) did not change their curriculum or strategies based on either the CAHSEE or the STAR tests. Most instructors (75%) did not use the data available through OARS to change their strategies or curriculum.

85% of teachers who responded to the Classified and Certificated Survey (Appendix) indicated most use teacher-generated assessment results to modify, revise or re-teach curriculum. Teachers, with the exception of the mathematics department, found the district office's formerly-mandated Standards Based Exams (SBEs), not aligned with state-mandated tests, and do not use them.

Formal data assessment, although utilized by the site, has been viewed by staff primarily as "a response to outside demands". The district and school are reactionary to these formal assessment results. The delays in score dispersal make individual remediation of student needs, as indicated by standardized testing, implausible and unwieldy for course instructors. This has resulted in sparse use of non-classroom assessment at most department levels. Teachers place greater reliance upon their own assessment tools, both in-house produced and publisher-based, discounting external assessment as an often inaccurate evaluation of actual student knowledge and progress.

Strengths

- Site administration supports teacher-led piloting and implementation of new teaching styles and methodologies
- Sharing of district-wide resources as well as site-based resources
- Classroom data collected is used to modify curriculum
- SRHS staff regards assessment as a valuable tool to modify instruction
- The variety of assessment strategies used to best meet the needs of the course, the student and the instructor
- Ability and willingness of non-core classes to support the acquisition and practice of academic skills
- Teachers embed assessment tasks into instruction to assess the students' progress,
- Site administrative support for alternative assessments

Supporting Evidence

- Student transcripts
- Grade books

- Lesson plans
- Lesson plan books or logs
- Project portfolios
- Student projects
- OARS reporting
- CAHSEE results
- STAR testing
- SBE results
- AYP/API scores
- Teacher-generated exams, projects, essays, observations through class participation and performances
- Math and science department's "warm-ups" or "short answer" questions on the board (or overhead)
- Assessment and Accountability Student Survey (Appendix)
- Assessment and Accountability Staff Survey (Appendix)

Key Issues

- Assessment results (except the objective, "outside tests") drive grades, however little effort to tie the results into student personal learning plans is evident. More time is needed for sharing and planning in teaching community
- Staff needs further training in assessment analysis to guide curricular improvements
- Lack of resources to implement instructional changes indicated as necessary through data analysis
- Declining/stagnating API and AYP scores
- NCLB, CAHSEE, STAR, and CELDT scores are currently the only widespread data sources available. These are neither universal nor adequate to gauge student achievement; assessments ignore non-tested academic and elective classes
- A slow shift of campus-wide attitudes toward creating "learning", rather than "teaching" communities
- English Language Learners need better support in site-based classes to improve language skills.
- Counselor/student ratio. Counselors lack time to formally and regularly provide more meaningful student planning and tracking, including graduation progress
- Software programs to allow students and parents to access attendance, grades, etc. from any computer is needed

D3: To what extent does the school, with the support of the district and community, have an assessment monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

The school district and SRHS staff regularly review student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results, and report to parents and other stakeholders. Students and parents are notified of student achievement regularly through term and semester grades. Grades are entered electronically to the district, and sent, via mail, to parents/guardians. Oral grades, given to students at mid-term, advise them of their current

progress. During oral grade week, instructors use the district's online grading program to notify parents/guardians of those students in jeopardy of failure.

District, state and federally mandated tests assess all students' progress in the core district and state standards. Individual students' scores, as well as overall school scores are reported yearly through the School Accountability Report Card (SARC).

Departments and individual teachers have established expected levels of student accomplishment and practice assessment and accountability regimes based on district, and state standards. Syllabi, created and distributed by classroom instructors, detail assessment areas and acceptable standards. Grading programs, such as Grade Machine and Easy Grade Pro, are available on all staff computers to provide assessment-monitoring systems.

ESLRs are assessed constantly. One instructor commented: "The ESLRs are not in the foreground of a lesson; they are the means by which my lesson is taught." Instructors' grade books include ESLR evaluations listed under many different headings: class participation, group work, originality, etc. Some instructors include ESLR reflection/assessment sections in assignments; others, through class discussions. Ultimately, these assessments are included in term and semester grade reporting.

Students with IEPs receive regular reports from classroom teachers, in addition to formal grades, through IEP forms. Counselors, administrators and staff meet with parents and students to determine the efficacy of current plans and to create strategies for future placements and additional supports.

The English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC), representing non-English speakers, has met for several years to adjust curriculum and teaching methodologies to address the particular challenges for these students. Special tutoring to prepare for the CAHSEE is a strong concern for the ELAC group, and site tutoring and test-focused preparation has been implemented.

CELDT scores as well as teacher recommendations are used to schedule ELL students appropriately.

Various local colleges and universities assist in the assessment process for SRHS. Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) tests incoming ESL students. The Junior College also assesses, through level placement exams, Mathematics and English readiness for many university pathway students who wish to take classes at the junior college concurrently with their high school enrollment. Although SRHS is not notified of specific results, SRJC transcripts reveal placement numbers and levels. Sonoma State University provides assessments through "Talent Search" and "Upward Bound Programs". SAT and ACT tests provide college-readiness data, as does post-graduate reporting

The vocational education department educates students with career/technical training skill sets. Students learn skills for future employment and certification in their specialized trade or industry, and are assessed on various levels of competency within those skill-sets.

Agriculture, Auto, Welding and Wood have specific units designed to instruct students with the necessary skills for entry-level employment upon completion of the course.

Strengths

- Extensive testing
- Grading software
- District reporting software
- Community access to results
- ESLRs incorporated in most teaching activities
- Preliminary vocational certification is offered

Supporting Evidence

- CAHSEE scores
- STAR scores
- CELDT scores
- Student report cards
- Grade books
- Grading software
- Computer grade input via district data processing
- Site Council minutes and the financial spreadsheet of the SITE Council
- Honor Roll
- “Student of the Month”
- Awards Nights
- Scholarships
- AP scores
- Specialized programs success

Key Issues

- District grade entry program is cumbersome
- Need to train more teachers to access and use OARS data
- Limited time to analyze and apply data

D4: To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected school wide learning results drive the school’s academic program, its regular evaluation and improvement?

Although data collection and analysis has been performed at the district level, a lack of comprehensive, ongoing analysis and cohesive discussion focusing on programs, services and resource allocation exists at the site level. Planned curricular changes are not comprehensively coordinated toward improving student achievement; the district office, often without input from the site or the teachers, has created policy. Significant changes in site administrators, staff turnover, and rapid enrollment growth during the past six years have led to a “fractured” sense of direction.

Graduation and curricular alignment now drive a large portion of the education program. Federal programs such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and state-wide assessments such as the CAHSEE, STAR, APRENDA, CAPA and SABE are used to generate the API and AYP scores which direct the academic program, its regular evaluation and improvement, and its usage of resources.

Nonetheless, Santa Rosa High School seeks to improve test scores while making student learning relevant. The implementation of the following indicates site willingness to use assessment as a tool to evaluate and direct change:

- AVID program department and program reviews
- ArtQuest's "Structure Review Committee" and internship program
- CISCO Academy
- UC-approved agriculture classes
- Creation of sheltered classes in core courses
- CAHSEE test preparation
- voluntary implementation of Prentice-Hall English program and summer training for applicable staff
- Sonoma State University tutors
- Staff attendance at AP training institutes
- After-school tutoring; additional focus on state standards
- Implementation of the "Accelerated Reader" program
- Commitment of non-core courses to support student acquisition of academic skills
- Increase in CLAD-certified faculty
- Restructuring of Special Education curriculum

WASC preparation led to a re-evaluation of the ESLRs by every department to determine their current applicability. The departmental ESLRs in Chapter 2 reflect both current satisfaction and a general assessment of need to clarify their applicability in each class, for every student.

Strengths

- Site council dedication to fund assessment-based needs
- SRHS Handbook
- Library Resources: book periodicals, computer-based research subscriptions
- Buy-back days used to focus curricula for the purpose of alignment and to support student learning
- All core classes are in the process of aligning curricula
- Students and staff have recognized the importance of test scores and high stake testing
- Unified staff dedication to teaching "across curriculum" skills, particularly reading, writing and analysis

Supporting Evidence

- SRHS Handbook
- State assessment results (See Chapter 1)
- District SBE written and objective assessments (See Chapter 1)
- Teacher assessments
- Library
- Department agendas/minutes which concern curriculum alignment
- CAHSEE tutoring during lunch and after school
- District support for CAHSEE: tutoring, funding, software, administrative and staff training, and district score analysis
- Assessment and Accountability Staff Survey
- Increased student participation in state assessments (See Chapter 1)
- Buyback day minutes and plans
- Site staffing records (See Focus Group A)

- Departmental action plans (See Chapter 5)
- Textbook selection and funding
- Course offerings

Key Issues

- Curriculum alignment and standards based testing development
- Lack sufficient assessment strategies and methodologies to determine strengths and needs
- Insufficient training and mentoring of staff for curricula alignment
- Curriculum alignment documents lack development
- Limited understanding re: implementation of OARS data. Assessment and Accountability Faculty Survey results reflect additional training is needed
- Department common planning time to implement curricula alignment is severely limited
- Inconsistency in documenting department minutes
- Reduction of the disproportionate amount of time spent on test preparation at the expense of student learning
- Lack of clarity about the extent to which district and board are involved in the review process
- Lack of clarity about the extent to which school staff is involved in the review process
- Lack of clarity about extent to which students and parents are involved in the ongoing about student performance review process
- Inequitable apportionment of buy-back days