

Supporting Student Learning Through Formative Assessments

Formative assessments and the information they provide are a key component within the wide variety of techniques and strategies used by District 34 educators to support student learning.

Athletic coaches enhance the skills and performance of athletes through close, critical observation of practice. This observation is complemented with targeted feedback for improvements. Teachers support student learning in the same way as they consistently monitor understanding and support learning with specific feedback. In addition, this close monitoring allows teachers to make adjustments in their instruction to support the learning process.

How Will We Know Students Are Learning?

Formative assessments play a key role as teachers work to answer the question of “How will we know students are learning?” In order to find the answer, educators use various formative measures to regularly gauge student learning. This is different from summative assessments, which usually take the form of an end of unit test.

In order to assess student learning of key concepts, teachers design questions, activities, and short, frequent assessments that provide them with information to determine next steps. This assessment for learning is often embedded in



Formative assessments are one tool teachers use to help increase student achievement.

their instruction to provide timely information for critical feedback for students.

Evaluating Understanding

In the classroom, this might be the teacher questioning and gauging understanding while students are working by asking several pre-planned questions to ensure all students are learning the concepts that are being taught. This is not as simple as just asking questions, but takes advance work on the instructor’s part to ensure the interactions provide

the needed information to evaluate if students understand the information being taught in the lesson.

Ultimately, formative assessment is most effective when used by both the teacher and the student. For teachers it provides key information for determining appropriate resources, pacing, grouping, and experiences for student learning. Teachers can then share clear, specific feedback with students about what they

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Student Achievement Remains High

There are two major achievement measures that District 34 utilizes to help determine how well students are performing compared to peers both nationally and within the State of Illinois.

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) exam is an adaptive computerized national assessment that helps to estimate the knowledge a student has in a specific curricular area with more precision than typical standardized assessments. The questions are selected and sequenced based on the pattern of the student's correct responses; therefore, no two tests are exactly the same. This helps educators understand which specific content areas a student has learned and which areas are a challenge. The NWEA assessments are given in math, reading, and language usage starting in third grade.

ISAT Results Determine Adequate Yearly Progress

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) assessment is a paper and pencil test given to 3rd through 8th grade students in reading and math. It is also given to 4th and 7th grade students in science. The same grade level exam is given to all students. ISAT results, and other measures, are used by the federal government to determine if schools and districts are making progress as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The achievement expectations set by the federal and state governments, called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), have been increasing since NCLB's inception and will continue to increase each year until 2014 when 100% of public school children are expected to meet state standards in all areas. In order to make AYP, 85% or more of the students overall and within each subgroup must have met or exceeded state standards.

The student achievement report was recently provided to the Board by Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Beth Tsoumas.

On the NWEA exams, District 34 students met or exceeded national high performing achievement expectations on all 19 measures. The District goes beyond the national high performing targets to set its goals for the NWEA measures. Even with goals that are significantly higher than the high performing national norms, District 34 students met those elevated targets on 18 of the 19 measures.

On the most recent ISAT assessments, overall 94% of



District 34 students continue to show high academic achievement.

students either met or exceeded state standards. At the State level, 82% of students either met or exceeded state standards.

Meeting High Standards

The District has set goals for the percentage of students who are exceeding and the percentage who are meeting the goals on the ISAT test in reading and math. In 17 of the 24 measures, the District's students are meeting those goals, or were within one percentage point.

"These results show that teachers, support staff and administrators are focused on ensuring that students have a deep understanding of the curriculum through the use of a wide variety of instructional techniques designed to individualize student learning," Tsoumas says.

She added that even with the high marks the District earned, there is always room for improvement, especially in subgroups such as low socioeconomic, English Language Learners and students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Both an executive summary of the student achievement report and the full report are available on the District website at www.glenview34.org.

Not Too Early to Think About Summer School

District 34 will again offer both reinforcement and enrichment summer school classes this year. Summer school enrichment classes are available to any student living within the District 34 attendance boundaries, including students who are enrolled in private or parochial schools. A course catalog and sign up information will be on the District's website at www.glenview34.org by February 1.

Board Approves 2012 Tax Levy Projected at 3.4%

The District 34 Board of Education held a public hearing for the 2012 tax levy and adopted the tax levy during its December 17 meeting.

Each year the levy is subject to the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), otherwise known as the “tax cap.” This law restricts the growth in property tax revenue to the lesser of 5% or the rate of inflation (CPI).

Approved bond and interest levies, along with new property, are exempt from the tax cap. While the total value of new property is not currently known, all school districts by law were to file the levy request before December 25, 2012. Therefore, it is common practice for school districts to approve a “balloon” levy, which means the approval of a levy that is larger than the expected levy. This practice is in place for school

districts to avoid permanently losing revenue from new property by underestimating the value of the new property.

While a “balloon” levy is approved by many school districts, ONLY the levy amount allowed by law is actually received by the school district. Due to the uncertainty around the amount of new property, the Board approved a 4.5% increase over the 2011 tax levy extension. However, the 2012 final aggregate levy is projected to be a 3.4% increase over the prior year, which would result in approximately \$44,702,221 in local tax revenue without the debt service levy for the school district. The owner of a home with a market value of \$500,000 can expect to pay an additional \$117 in

property taxes to District 34 based upon the 3.4% projected increase.

Local property taxes make up approximately 88% of the District 34 total revenues. In fiscal year 2012, District 34 cut \$700,000 from the budget. For the current fiscal year, \$1.8 million was cut from the budget. These cuts are cumulative and by the 2016 fiscal year budget cuts will accumulate to approximately \$11 million. Despite all of these cuts, the approved budget for this year is a deficit spending budget. The current projections indicate deficit spending budgets each of the next four years.

Kindergarten and New Student Registration Begins February 21

Parents of children who will be kindergartners this fall should plan to attend District 34’s registration event on Thursday, February 21 at their home school. Parents of first- and second-grade students who will be new to the District in 2013–14 should also plan to attend the event.

Registration will take place at Henking, Lyon and Westbrook schools for District 34’s half-day program. The District does not offer full-day kindergarten.

Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2013 to be eligible for kindergarten. Exceptions are not made to this policy.

Registration is a parent only event, as it is a time for parents to complete paperwork and ask questions of administrators and staff. At Henking and Lyon, registration will be from 4:30 p.m. until 7 p.m. At Westbrook, registration runs from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Please contact your school to receive your registration packet and important information you will need to complete the registration process. Please know that book and PTA fees will be collected at the time of registration.

By registering students at this event, or very soon after the event date, the District can begin to plan staffing for the 2013–14 school year.

If a parent is unable to attend the February 21 event, please contact the school to make other arrangements to register your child as soon as possible after February 21.

Henking School	998-5035
Lyon School	998-5045
Westbrook School	998-5055



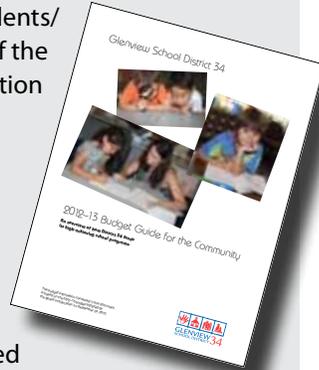
Interested in Learning More about the Budget?

The District 34 "Budget Guide for the Community" is aimed at helping residents learn more about the District's finances and budget process.

The 16-page document can either be viewed on the District's website at www.glenview34.org/board/budget or a copy can be mailed to you by calling Melanie Walstrom at 847-998-5000.

Included in the guide is information related to where the operating funds are directed in the school district (approximately 96% to instruction of students/direct support to students), the sources of the District's revenues (89% local) and a question and answer section.

In related fiscal information, between the last fiscal year and the current fiscal year, District 34 cut \$2.5 million from the budget. Those cuts are cumulative and by the 2016 fiscal year, budget cuts will accumulate to approximately \$11 million. Despite all of these cuts, the approved budget for this year is a deficit spending budget. The projections indicate deficit spending budgets in each of the next four years.



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are doing well and where they can improve. Students use this feedback to assess their work and reflect on their learning. Moreover, students can then take ownership of their learning. By assessing the quality of their work against the learning target or standard, they are taking a significant role in promoting their own learning in the classroom.

When used effectively, formative assessments help ensure students have learned the key concepts from that specific curricular area, which leads to higher student learning as evidenced by summative assessments.

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