



**Rationale and Replacement Plan
for Waiver from State Statute and Rules**

Basic Information:

District Name: Lewis-Palmer School District 38

District Address: 146 Jefferson Street, Monument, CO 80132

District Contact: Sheila Beving

District Contact Phone Number: 719-785-4210

District Contact Email Address: sbeving@lewispalmer.org

STATUTE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE

Colo. Rev. Stat. §22-7-1014(2) (a) requires each district to administer the school readiness assessment to each student enrolled in kindergarten to measure each student's progress toward demonstrating school readiness. Colo. Rev. Stat. §22-2-117 permits the state board to waive any of the requirements imposed by Title 22 upon application of the board of education of any school district.

Rationale: We are seeking a waiver of one time-intensive requirement that will not impact student achievement in our schools: the school readiness assessment required by CAP4K (SB 08-212), Colo. Rev. Stat. §22-7-1014(2) (a). We understand the important purpose underlying this requirement and already have in place a reliable alternative strategy to meet the intent of the law in a manner far better suited to our community.

The flexibility obtained through this requested waiver is necessary to:

- Free our educators to focus on our standards, curriculum and assessment design work, and enhance their ability to meet the educational needs of our student population; and,
- Allow our classroom teachers to focus their classroom time on instruction.

Our kindergarten teachers monitor each student's progress towards readiness throughout the year using a combination of direct observation and data received through standardized testing such as Dibels Next and locally developed assessments. On a daily basis, our kindergarten teachers assess their students' growth in academic and developmental domains. These domains include academic, physical development and health, social and emotional development, cognitive/logic and reasoning, and approaches to learning. The District's standards-based report cards are used to regularly report kindergarten students' progress toward these domains. Permitting the District to rely on its standards-based report card assessment system offers similar information to parents and educators without the burdensome additional reporting requirements imposed by TS Gold or a similar approved assessment. Granting the requested waiver would afford teachers more time and opportunity for daily instruction and planning,



thereby enhancing educational opportunity and quality within the District. Granting the waiver also permits us to continue to offer the same standards-based report card system K-5, promoting continuity and therefore better understanding by parents and students of the reporting system. Forcing the District to use TS Gold or a similar assessment in kindergarten would lead to either the confusion of multiple reporting systems or the use of a new reporting system that is not aligned with the rest of our elementary schools.

Plan: District 38 kindergarten students receive standards-based instruction based on the Colorado Academic Standards. While the TS Gold assessment closely aligns with Colorado Academic Standards, the District’s standards-based report card is also developed from and closely aligned with Colorado Academic Standards. Additionally, the District’s standards-based report card measures and reports on the developmental domains. Our plan is to measure student progress toward the academic and developmental domains using the standards-based report cards rather than using TS Gold or a similar assessment. All District 38 teachers receive instruction on the use of a variety of assessments to collect a body of evidence to report on the assessed objectives and indicators of the report card. Lewis-Palmer School District 38 offers the most comprehensive and detailed report cards among peer districts, with a high degree of specificity for each content area. Additionally, indicators of Reading, Writing, Communicating, and Mathematics are generally well-aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards.

1. Academic domain
 - Kindergarten teachers instruct in all Colorado academic standards and report progress using the standards-based report cards.
 - The rigor at which Kindergarten students are assessed on TS Gold is much less than the rigor of the Colorado Academic Standards that our District reports on the standards-based report cards.
 - In addition to frequent classroom level formative assessments and reporting, all kindergarten students are assessed with Dibels Next three times per year in accordance with the READ Act.

2. Physical development and health
 - Students participate regularly in a structured physical education class meeting or exceeding state standards. Students participate in a structured recess program daily that encourages gross motor development. Teachers routinely assess kindergarten students on motor-development skills and health throughout the year. These data are reported on the standards-based report card under the categories “Physical Education”.
 - Students participate regularly in art education that meets or exceeds state standards. Drawing, painting, and making objects all develop students’ fine motor skills. Teachers routinely assess kindergarten students on fine motor skills development and report under the category “Plans and Creates” under Art on the standards-based report card.



- Students participate regularly in music education that meets or exceeds state standards. Students participate in a variety of movement and rhythm exercises. Teachers routinely assess kindergarten students and report on their progress under the standards-based report card category “Expression of Music.”
3. Social and emotional development
- Students are instructed in the positive behavior support system implemented by the school. This includes expectations for student behavior in the classroom, cafeteria, hallway and during recess. Various positive behavior techniques are implemented in kindergarten classrooms in order to develop and strengthen self-regulation and executive function.
 - Student progress in this domain is reported in the “Academic Success Habits” and “Behaviors that Contribute to Learning” categories on the standards-based report card. Additionally, the teachers report student progress toward executive functioning skills and self-regulation as well as positive social interactions.
4. Cognitive/logic and reasoning
- Cognitive/logic and reasoning skills are emphasized in all content areas in kindergarten.
 - Student progress in this domain is reported throughout the standards-based report card. Some specific examples include the categories of “comprehension” and “research and reasoning” within the content area of “reading/writing/communicating.” Similarly, student progress is reported under the categories “number sense, properties & operations” and “shape, dimension & geometric relationships” within the content area of mathematics.
5. Approaches to learning
- This domain is emphasized throughout the day in all instruction. Student progress in this domain is reported throughout the standards-based report card. Some specific examples are included under the categories of “Academic Success Habits” and “Behaviors that Contribute to Learning”:
 - Follow directions
 - Uses class time effectively
 - Uses correct pencil grip
 - Completes quality class work
 - Prints name
 - Follows school and classroom rules
 - Respects rights and property of others
 - Resolves conflict appropriately
 - Works and plays cooperatively with others



Teacher Trainings for Standards Based Report Cards: When the Standards Based Report Card was introduced to the elementary teachers, it was done so in a three-year intensive roll-out. Schools received release time to receive training around standards-based instruction, standards-based grading, and effective assessment strategies. Training and calibration continue at the school sites and district level through professional development days to ensure valid and reliable grading. Teachers engage with assessments (including the Individual Profiles of Progress) ensuring inter-rater reliability. The teachers demonstrate standardization in the district's measurement and reporting systems. The Learning Services team continues to train new teachers and support schools in the effective use of standards-based instruction, grading and reporting. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor teacher. At the elementary level, mentor teachers work extensively with new teachers on the standards-based instruction and effective use of the district report card and measures.

Interventions: In all domains, student progress is regularly assessed. If a student is not making adequate progress, the school implements Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) strategies. Each school has a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Support, including differentiated universal instruction, specific targeted interventions, and intensive interventions, as appropriate to the learner. MTSS plans are developed for students in collaboration with parents and school staff. MTSS plans include the results of progress monitoring assessments to determine the efficacy of the interventions. MTSS plans are housed in our student information system, Alpine. If multiple interventions are not successful, students may be referred for further evaluation to determine whether other services are necessary.

Methods and assessments used are clear and relevant and are designed to inform teachers' practice and maximize each student's progress toward demonstrating school readiness, which satisfy the intent of the law governing individualized readiness plans [Colo. Rev. Stat. §22-7-1014(2)(a)].

Readiness Plans: Lewis-Palmer School District 38 kindergarten students are assessed on academic and behavioral domains using a body of evidence from a variety of assessment opportunities. Student progress and readiness in these domains is reported through the standards-based report card, and the data is housed in our Alpine data management system. Performance levels on the standards-based report card indicate relative strengths and weaknesses that are highlighted by the teacher and communicated with student and families. The results of these report cards, including relative strengths and weaknesses, are used to guide and personalize instruction through the setting of individual student goals and the implementation of research-based strategies.

Articulation between Preschool and Kindergarten: Lewis-Palmer School District 38 chose to stay with the original TS Gold Assessment rather than move to the 3.0 Platform.



This allows data to be shared during transition from one level to the next. In order to facilitate this articulation, Learning Services staff has conducted trainings around the Standards Based Report Card with the Preschool staff and has addressed the domains through training with the Kindergarten teachers. In addition, 4 out of our 5 elementary schools have a pre-school, which allows for observations and articulations to occur as needed throughout the year.

Duration of the Waiver: Lewis-Palmer School District 38 requests the waiver until such time as Lewis-Palmer School District 38's Board of Education requests revocation of the waiver.

Financial Impact: Lewis-Palmer School District 38 anticipates that the requested waiver will have a positive financial impact upon the District. Administration of TS Gold would necessitate the purchase of additional technology infrastructure, substitute release time for TS Gold training, and training materials for kindergarten teachers. Training on the TS Gold site (Basic and IRR training) for 11 teachers and 8 paraprofessionals (at an average hourly rate) = \$5,936, data entry time = \$24,624, substitute teachers to cover training = \$2,910, setting up the program on the state site and maintenance = \$3,405, computer/iPads for data collection and on the spot recoding = \$4,400. Total cost = \$41,725.

Instructional Impact: The District anticipates that the observations and recording of data to comply with TS Gold assessment requirements will take at least 2 hours per student, or about 50 total hours over the course of the 2016-2017 school year. Additionally, teachers will need approximately 2 days or about 15 hours of training to use the TS Gold system. Therefore, the District estimates that complying with the State Board approved assessment requirement will require approximately 65 hours of additional instructional and/or planning time for each class above and beyond current responsibilities. This represents a significant loss of valuable instructional and/or planning time with no additional information beyond that of the standards-based report card.

How the Impact of the Waiver will be Evaluated: The impact of this waiver will be measured by the additional time made available for teacher planning and instruction that would have otherwise been used to administer the TS Gold assessment. We will also measure the impact of the waiver by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to the District's curriculum and overall program design. Furthermore, the Learning Services Department will review school readiness plans for kindergarten students.

Expected Outcomes: For six years, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 has been accredited with distinction. We expect that as a result of this waiver, we will be able to continue to provide this level of excellence for our kindergarten learners through appropriate assessments and supports to ensure their continued success.