

To: Dr. Mahoney
Board of Education
From: Heidi Deininger
Re: Board Report
Date: 3/13/2024



[School Improvement Plan](#) (click on this link to see most recent progress)

Some important dates:

- Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) 7th & 8th grades – Ap 2, 4, 5 8, 9, 11
- PSAT/SAT testing 9-11th grades – April 12 (junior high students will have an eLearning day)
- Prom- Saturday April 27
- 8th grade recognition night: Friday, May 17th 7:00 OHS gym
- Senior Honors Night -
- Graduation on Sunday, May 19 at 1:00 PM (we moved it to a Sunday to avoid IHSA state track conflicts)

Student Activities

- Molly Ziegler won at district FFA proficiency award interviews. Molly will compete at state level later this month!
- We had several students win awards at the junior high and high school level at the solo/ensemble music competition.

Academics

We took a practice PSAT/SAT test on February 16th. Below are percentage of students who **met/exceeded the benchmark** on the practice tests.

High School

Practice Test	Math	ELA
PSAT 9	35%	35%
PSAT 10	40%	10% *
SAT	16%	33%

Takeaways:

- In each grade level, the practice test indicated specific areas to target in preparing for the actual assessment in April; math teachers have prep groups going at grade levels 8-11
- For SAT practice we split the juniors into two groups and used two different practice tests to see if one of them was more closely aligned to the actual test. One of the groups took the test that was our usual practice assessment (Horizon) the other group took Bluebook, which is the practice test designed by College Board to mirror the new SAT.
- Teachers are working with students to understand the new test and how to tackle it. For example, in the math section, there is a new calculator called Desmos. We are committed to insuring the students know how to best use this tool while they are taking the test.

*There were several sophomores who didn't complete the math section of the PSAT 10. We have been working with sophomores on a follow up practice math test. The score is not indicative of their ability.

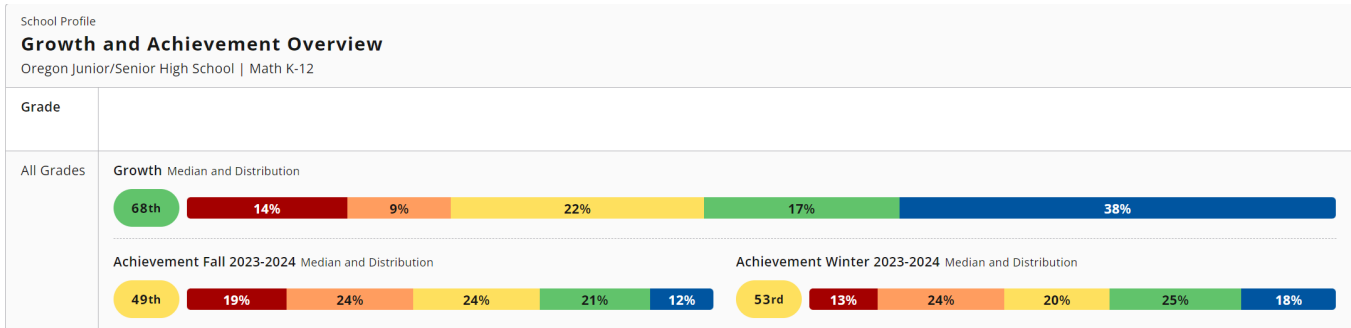
Junior High

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Data:

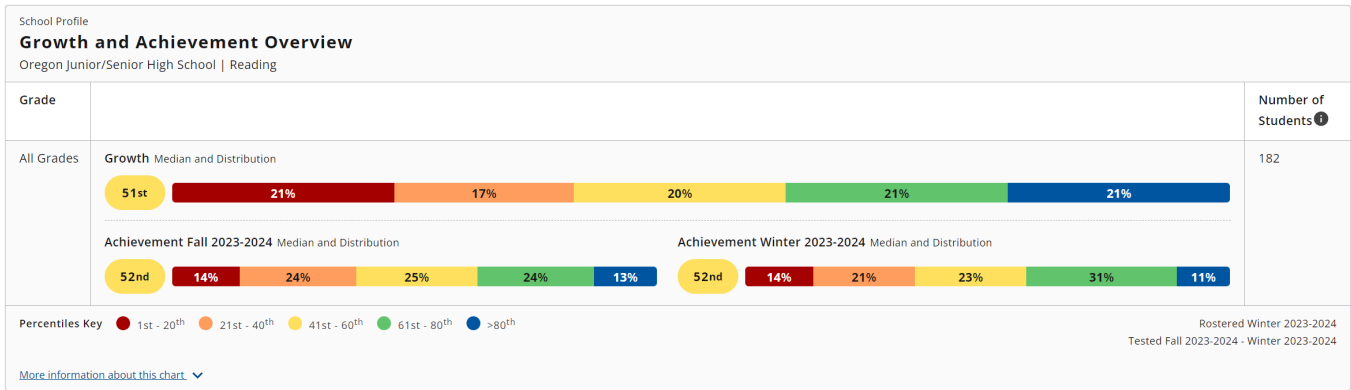
We included this data last month as well, but we wanted to make sure and highlight specific things we are doing to insure 7th and 8th grade students are prepared for the assessment.

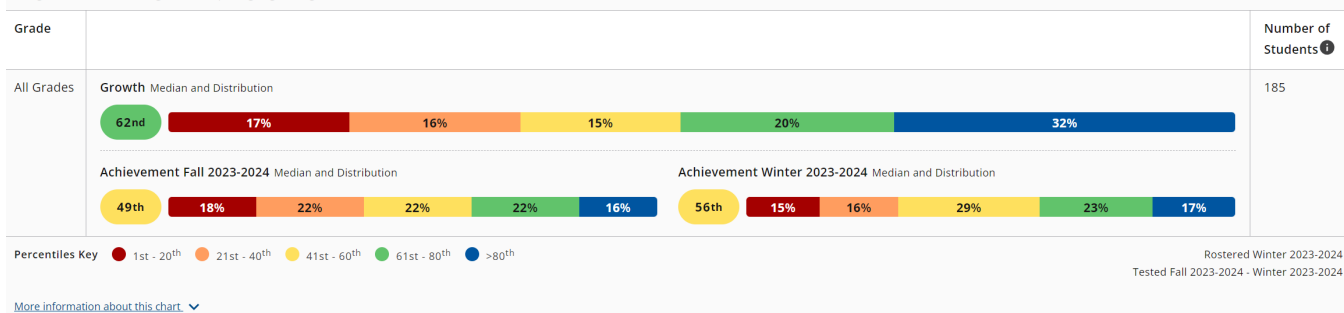
- 7th and 8th grade intervention classes are working to prepare students for how to take the test. They are covering the tools that students can use within the test and making sure students know what the test looks like. In addition, students are practicing skills needed on the IAR (which they have been doing all year)
- 7th and 8th grade math are practicing math problems that will be assessed that may not have come up in the scope and sequence of math class yet.
- 8th grade math is doing a specific intervention for students who were close to meeting but just need a little review of specific skills. 7th grade math does this as part of class.
- 7th and 8th grade ELA has been practicing the types of reading passages and answering questions that students will see on the assessment (they have been doing this all year) and practicing writing tasks and stamina for taking the test.

Math



Reading





The Leader in Me – Spotlight- Communications team

The athletic leadership council (ALC) was developed as part of the Student Leadership/Leader in Me team. This student leadership group is lead by many of our head/assistant coaches, including Seger Larson, Nick Schneiderman, John Bothe, Broc Kundert, Dave Boyer and Nate Rogers. The students involved are athletes who are leaders. Over the past year, this group has worked with the students to simulate planning practices, team bonding events, reviewing team policies, etc. The student athletes have looked at their teams through the eyes of the coaches. And the coaches have had the opportunity to hear honest feedback from the athletes. It is a great opportunity for all involved.

Profile of a Graduate

- We have been publicizing the Profile of a Graduate through the district FB page and asking anyone who is on the page to take the survey. We have had 56 responses so far and will keep pushing it out for a few more weeks.
- Our next meeting will be with a small work group to identify the themes and start defining what we want for every student who graduates from OCUSD 220, as based on the themes that emerged from the surveys and initial focus groups.
- We are also determining ways to support this work within our school day and embed the things we are already doing (i.e. Leader in Me, community service, activities, academics).

A few things of note:

As we are discussing the Profile of a Graduate and what we want for our students as graduates of OCUSD, we feel it is important to note opportunities, accomplishments and improvements our school has added over the past few years. While standardized testing is one measure of a school's progress, we would like to highlight a few others.

- Our music program (choir and band) is consistently in the top 10 in the state music sweepstakes
- In the past three years, we have added four dual credit courses, five AP courses and next year we will offer our students three career pathway options at OJSHS (in addition to those that can be taken at Whiteside Area Career Center)
- We have increased the number of 8th graders taking Algebra by 100% from 2022-23 to 2023-24; this is important because Algebra in 8th grade has a strong correlation to meets/exceeds on state testing.
- We introduced Pre-AP English to freshmen so more students are ready to take AP courses at the sophomore, junior and senior levels.
- We have more than 20 students who are taking college level courses during their school day (not dual credit, these are actual college courses).

- We have implemented Leader in Me to increase leadership skills with all students. This year, our student lighthouse team has worked all year to create a peer mentoring program, which we will do training for implementation next year.
- We have partnered with Sauk Valley Community College for the Sauk Impact program, which allows students to earn free tuition in exchange for community service.
- We have implemented Project Lead the Way for students 7-12, which is a nationally recognized computer science and engineering program.
- We have introduced new electives at all grade levels.
- We have experience overall growth in our average of Freshmen on track and growth in our graduation rate
- We have developed the athletic action plan, which has guided our growth and increased expectations for developing our athletes and programs
- We have the 2022 Illinois teacher of the year, and also several award winning teachers through the Those Who Excel program
- We have strengthened our Hawks Take Flight program to better serve our students identified as at risk entering high school
- We have built our social emotional support system to include a behavior interventionist, as well as a full time social worker who work with ALL students experiencing any type of stress or trauma; and partnered with NEXUS to support our most challenged families
- We have been on US News and World Report's Top High Schools in America list for the past 3 years.
- We have several students who have earned state degrees and won proficiencies through FFA
- We have expanded our agriculture program to include many new courses and even have a fully operational CNC machine that was donated to our classes; we partner with Etnyre to make parts for projects that they need assistance with.
- At the present time, we have 10 students with over 200 hours of community service. Additionally, we have 10% of our students with at least 100 hours of community service and 30% with at least 50 hours; conversely – there are 25% of our students with zero (and many of these are 7th graders or new students).
- We also survived the pandemic and thrived when we combined the schools.

We think it is very important to recognize all that we are working on and building at OJSHS. We are challenging our students – every, single day – to grow academically and social-emotionally. We are continuously improving the student experience at OJSHS so students are college **and** career ready. We agree that IAR and SAT are important indicators of academic growth, but we also value and celebrate all of the other opportunities & supports we are able to provide our students.