



*A Community of Learners*

## **Informational Memo: New Trier Data and Articulation**

TO: School Board  
Superintendent Kocanda

FROM: Barry Rodgers  
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### **Background**

District 36 uses multiple valid measures to ensure the growth and achievement of all students. These measures are shared as part of the Fall Assessment report and at the end of the school year at the June Board meeting. The suite of assessments which include the MAP assessment, Teachers College Reading Assessment and the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (formerly PARCC) provide actionable data to support students and provide feedback on our academic programming.

In addition to these assessments, the District has been collaborating with New Trier High School and its feeder schools to gain further insights into the long-term success of our students. Two of the products arising from this partnership include the New Trier Township 8th Grade Survey and the annual practice of a student focus group of NT freshmen students. This memo serves to share information from the survey and focus group. The memo also provides Freshmen NT student placement and grade data as shared by New Trier per the request of District 36.

## **NT Grade Data**

New Trier collects data on student placement distribution and grade distribution. This data is shared with District 36 to provide information on students who have graduated from Washburne School. The data is organized to include the areas of English, Math, MCL (Modern and Classical Languages), Science, and Social Studies. The data also indicates letter grade distribution by level. This memo includes data collected during the first semester of the 2018-19 school year for the New Trier Class of 2022. Data was also collected for the second semester in order to check for continuity between first and second semester. For each of the defined areas, an average of Township sender schools is included for the purpose of general comparison. In terms of NT student population, Washburne students comprise 20% of the total distribution of 1019 students. Approximately 10% of Washburne students matriculate to schools other than New Trier. When examining the data, please note that a change in 1% point is equivalent to 2 Washburne students. A complete distribution of all Township NT sender schools follows this memo for the past three years can be found here:

[Class of 2020](#)

[Class of 2021](#)

[Class of 2022](#)

An analysis of the Class of 2022 data set demonstrates that overall, Washburne graduates attending New Trier earned a smaller percentage of A's/A- in all measured academic areas other than Math. In comparison, last year's data (NT class of 2021) showed that Washburne graduates earned a higher percentage of A's/A- in all measured academic areas. A further look at the data set going back two years (NT class of 2020) shows that Winnetka students earned a higher percentage of A's and A- in English and Science. For level 4 classes, Winnetka graduates increased their percentage of A's/A- by 4% as compared to last year's cohort. The NT Township increased its percentage in level 4 classes by 10%. A careful review of the data over the past three years indicates variability by cohort, level, and by subject matter.

When examining the combined grades of A's and B's in all measured areas in each of the past three years, Winnetka 36 graduates surpassed the NT Township average all three years. An examination of historical data focuses on the past three years because it most closely aligns with current academic programming and experiences for District 36 and New Trier. This information helps to inform relevant articulation between District 36 and New Trier.

A review of the data shows variability. Nonetheless, the areas of World Language and Science demonstrated the largest discrepancy. In response, we will be conducting targeted articulation with New Trier in these areas beginning this fall. Overall, the data can help our continuous improvement efforts by facilitating collaboration with New Trier. Grade data from New Trier is used in concert to further our continuous improvement efforts as indicated below:

- Coordinating with New Trier and New Trier Township feeder schools to improve our articulation efforts for each subject area.
- Utilizing the new NT Township 8th grade and 10th grade survey to gain a better understanding of strengths and areas of growth.
- Utilizing feedback from ninth grade student focus group to determine knowledge, skills, needed to support ongoing success at New Trier.
- This fall, District 36 will have targeted articulation with New Trier on the content areas of World Language and Science. This will include articulation meetings and classroom observations. This process will also serve as an important touchpoint for our World Language program which is currently under review in the curriculum cycle.

### **Freshmen Focus Group**

For the second year, District 36 administrators conducted a freshmen focus group with former D36 students. In May, twelve former Washburne students discussed their transition to New Trier, their perceptions of their level of preparedness for their classes, and the impact their years at Washburne have had upon their first year of high school. Washburne students reported the following regarding the classes in the core areas:

Writing/ELA: The general consensus was that the writing process has a greater focus on in-depth analysis as opposed to what is taught at Washburne. New Trier uses a “TEQA” approach for paragraph writing. It is important to note that this approach is no longer aligned with state standards. In terms of process, students commented that they had more time to revise their work when at Washburne.

Social Studies: Students felt prepared for Social Studies. They noted that the written questions at the end of the high school Social Studies tests expected more of them. They stressed the importance of learning good note-taking in order to be successful.

Science: Some students felt they were not as prepared for NT Science classes. They noted this may be due to the fact that NT has a singular traditional science focus (Chem, Physics, or Bio) versus a spiraling curriculum at Washburne. While they recognized this may be due to the fact they were now in high school, some felt students from other schools may have had a greater knowledge base regarding subject-specific terminology.

Math: Students felt they were prepared for math - particularly the homework aspect. Some students stated that math “was a repeat . . . but a deeper study”.

Students had an opportunity to share other insights into their high school experience. Students noted the significance of focusing on their homework, but also noted the importance of balance with other activities and being part of the school community. They saw great benefits in talking to teachers and other students in order to build relationships and successfully navigate the high school experience.

When asked about their experience at Washburne, students stated that they benefited from the advisory program (where students formed relationships that continue at New Trier), the number of student projects that involved student choice, and the increase in independence they gained during their seventh and eighth grade years.

### **NT Township Survey**

In 2018, New Trier Township Superintendents and Township schools developed a common tool to longitudinally review student experiences and make use of data for improvement efforts. The survey has a focus on skill sets, attitudes, and behaviors that are research-based predictors for long-term success. Across New Trier Township, the survey is given to 8th graders in the spring, again as Sophomores, Seniors and then as college Sophomores. Each student cohort will have four touch points, enabling us to examine perceptions over time, an invaluable benefit to effectively improve the student experience. While some questions will shift to align for age relevancy, the majority of the questions align and will allow for longitudinal data across several years.

The class of 2022 will be taking the NT Township Sophomore Survey this fall. Information gained from the survey will be reviewed together with grade data and focus group information.

### **Alignment with the District 36 Shared Vision**

The District 36 Shared Vision empowers all students to engage in continual growth and achievement. Information on student placement, achievement, and overall experience at the secondary level helps to inform our efforts for school improvement.

### **Next Steps**

We will continue to collaborate with administrators from New Trier to monitor our students' progress and provide feedback to continuously improve the learning experience for all District 36 students.

- ❑ Share and discuss grade data and focus group findings with Washburne teachers.
- ❑ Conduct articulation meetings and classroom observations with New Trier in the areas of World Language and Science this fall.
- ❑ Engage in Township articulation in the area of English Language Arts and Writing this winter and spring.
- ❑ Review New Trier Township Sophomore Survey
- ❑ Share findings in the Fall Assessment Report at the October 22 Board meeting and June Board meeting.