

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCOUNTABILITY: Refers to those systems used to hold schools and districts accountable for student performance. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) and introduction of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001 held states increasingly accountable for the performance of their schools and districts in an effort to reach 100% student proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014. Schools are measured annually based on students' participation and performance on standardized exams, attendance, and graduation rates, as both an aggregate and disaggregated by subgroups.

In Wisconsin, the Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is responsible for measuring academic progress and student achievement, and publicly reporting school and district performance annually. Although all traditional public schools and charter schools participate in testing and reporting, NCLB only requires schools receiving Title I funds to implement sanctions upon identification of poor performance. (*see System of Accountability*)

ACHIEVEMENT GAP: The achievement gap refers to the observed educational disparity between the performance of groups of students, especially among different race/ethnicities and socioeconomic statuses.

ACT: ACT is a nonprofit organization that produces The Act[®] Test, a college entrance exam that is voluntarily taken by a majority of Wisconsin high school students (71% of 2011 graduates) to predict college readiness. Many institutions of higher education use ACT scores as a measure within their admissions process. On average, Wisconsin students score high on the ACT (22.2, representing the third highest average score in the nation), and students' scores indicated over 81% of students taking the test would earn a passing grade in a credit-bearing course. Although Wisconsin students consistently score high on the ACT, scores have shown little growth in recent years.

ASSESSMENT: Educational assessment is the process of measuring knowledge and skills; that is, evaluating what students know and can do. Assessment instruments may include written tests, online tests, observation, portfolios, performance assessment, etc.

ATTAINMENT: Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education or schooling completed. It can be measured at the individual or cohort level. Attainment can also refer to attainment of proficiency on NCLB tests.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READY: [*working definition*] Students who are college and/or career ready demonstrate—upon graduation—the knowledge, skills, and habits needed to succeed in postsecondary education or training without remediation, and successfully participate in productive employment leading to a sustainable career.

Knowledge: Content knowledge in core content subject areas (e.g. Reading, mathematics)
Skills: Application and use of content knowledge (e.g. critical thinking, problem solving)

Habits: Personal habits which support academic and technical achievement (e.g., initiative, persistence, time management)

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS: Academic standards—currently available in English Language Arts and mathematics—that are common across all states that voluntarily adopt the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as their state academic standards. The standards specify what students should know and be able to do K-12. The intention of the CCSS is to:

- Align with college and career readiness standards.
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills.
- Prepare students to succeed in our global economy and society by building upon practices from high-achieving countries.

CCSS were developed in collaboration with representatives from participating states—including Wisconsin—educators, content experts, researchers, parents, business leaders, along with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY: In Wisconsin, 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESA) provide information, resources, and support to schools and districts within their boundaries. CESAs support the implementation of statewide initiatives, as well as support the specific needs of their schools and districts through professional development and training. CESAs are not state agencies and have no taxing authority. Instead, CESAs collect fees from member districts.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is Wisconsin's state education agency, or the state agency responsible for providing resources, support, and technical assistance to schools and districts statewide, as well as providing education information to all stakeholders.

DISAGGREGATED DATA: NCLB required states to report both aggregated and disaggregated data, that is, the performance of the total student population and the performance of student subgroups represented within each school and district. Required student subgroups include: race and ethnicity; English language learners (ELL); socioeconomic status (SES) as measured by free and reduced lunch (FRL), and students with disabilities (SwD). This requirement allows for the identification of achievement gaps.

ED: (*see USED*)

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS: Educator effectiveness is a major part of recent federal education reform. Many states, including Wisconsin, are in the process of developing robust and fair evaluation systems for their educators. A separate Educator Effectiveness Design Team is developing a framework to measure teacher and principal effectiveness, and expect to release the framework in Fall 2011.

ESEA: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) was America's first major federal education policy, and had the foundational principle of providing educational opportunities to the country's most disadvantaged youth.

NCLB: The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the current form of the ESEA law, was passed by Congress and signed into law on January 8, 2002. NCLB redefines the federal role

in K-12 education with the goal of closing the achievement gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers. (*See accountability*)

AYP: Each year under NCLB, all Wisconsin public schools and districts must meet the state's four Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives. Schools and districts must meet benchmarks for graduation or attendance rates, test participation, reading performance, and mathematics performance.

SCHOOL/DISTRICT IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT (SIFI/DIFI): Schools that miss AYP for two consecutive years in the same indicator (reading, mathematics, test participation, or attendance/graduation) are marked as SIFI. When a district misses AYP two years in a row, the district is labeled as DIFI. SIFI and DIFI labels result in sanctions that increase with each subsequent year the school or district is identified as a SIFI or DIFI.

GROWTH: A growth report is one of many indicators that can be used to evaluate student academic achievement. Growth reports help educators, parents, and the public answer questions about student progress over time, and whether that progress is reasonable or appropriate.

STUDENT GROWTH PERCENTILES (SGP) are one of many methods used to measure student growth. The statistical process behind SGP, developed by Damian Betebenner at the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, compares individual student progress against their academic peers, specifically those with the same test scores in prior years. DPI began providing student growth percentile reports for individual students, schools and districts in August 2011.

VALUE ADDED MODELS (VAM) are one of many methods used to measure student academic growth which attempts to account for differences attributable to a particular school, district, teacher, or program. The Value-Added Research Center (VARC) at Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) has a data-sharing agreement with DPI.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: Institutions of higher education (IHE) include two-year and four-year colleges and universities, technical and career colleges, and trade schools; or educational programs students enroll in upon graduation from high school. IHEs are also referred to as *postsecondary education*.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY: (LEA), or district

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS: The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative assessment administered across states (and several large, urban districts) to report what US students know and can do across multiple ages. NAEP data is not reported at the individual student or school level. Instead, it is meant to illustrate achievement trends at the national and state level across grade levels. Assessments are periodically administered to representative samples of students in grades four, eight, and twelve. As a requirement of NCLB, Title I schools are required to test students in reading and mathematics every two years, while other subjects (i.e., science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and US history) remain voluntary. Recent NAEP data indicates the average mathematics scale score in Wisconsin has held stagnant, while the average reading scale score has declined.

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY: In Wisconsin, the Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is responsible for setting high

standards for student achievement, measuring academic progress, and publicly reporting each school's performance annually.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: Postsecondary education refers to educational programs students enroll in upon graduation from high school. Postsecondary education includes two-year and four-year colleges and universities, technical and career colleges, and trade schools. Also referred to as *institutions of higher education*.

PROFICIENCY: The centerpiece of NCLB is for all students to be proficient in reading and mathematics. Wisconsin's state test measures student performance and reports performance into one of four categories: *minimal, basic, proficient, advanced*. Students with *proficient* or *advanced* scores are considered to have achieved proficiency in the subject area.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: In Wisconsin, Response to Intervention (RtI) is defined as a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students. Essential elements of RtI are: high quality instructional practice, balanced assessment, collaboration, and culturally responsive practices. RtI systems include meaningful family involvement, data-based decision making, and effective leadership to identify individual student needs.

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM: Wisconsin is a governing state within the 29-state SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). SBAC formed in response to the Race to the Top grant competition to develop an innovative assessment system aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The SMARTER assessment system will include a computer-adaptive summative assessment that includes multiple choice questions, computer-enhanced items, and performance tasks. The consortium has until 2014-15 to administer a fully operational summative assessment.

STATE EDUCATION AGENCY: *see DPI*

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: Summative assessments are designed to measure a student's learning at a specific point in time. The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) and the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD) are the state's summative assessments. The WKCE measures achievement in reading and mathematics, using multiple-choice and short-answer questions. The WKCE for grades 4, 8, and 10 also measures achievement in Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Writing. The test results provide parents with information about student achievement, and allow DPI to both meet NCLB requirements and determine the extent to which schools and districts are meeting the Wisconsin proficiency standards. The SMARTER assessment system will replace the WKCE in 2014-15. [*see SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium*]

SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY: The School and District Accountability Design Team is tasked with developing a system of accountability, which includes the following components:

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS: The Design Team will identify broad objectives for every school and districts at every grade level leading to college and career readiness.

MEASURES AND METRICS: The Design Team will identify the indicators which will measure the performance benchmarks.

ANNUAL DETERMINATIONS: The Design Team will identify a system that makes valid, reliable, and meaningful distinctions among schools and districts annually, especially between low and high performers.

ANNUAL REPORTING: The Design Team will identify how to illustrate schools' progress and performance in preparing students to graduate college and career ready in a clear and transparent manner.

DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW: The Design Team will identify what measures will be included in an intensive review of school and district systems which have been identified as high and low performing in order to inform future policy at the school, district, and state level.

SUPPORT, REWARDS, AND INTERVENTIONS: The Design Team will identify systems of support necessary for low performing schools and rewards for high performing schools. The systems of support and rewards will align with findings from the Diagnostic Review, detailed in the subsequent report.

STATEWIDE SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

Wisconsin's current Statewide System of Support (SSOS) is targeted at providing technical assistance to districts with Title I schools identified for improvement (SIFI), Title I schools that have missed Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and other Title I high priority schools. Rather than providing prescriptive measures for district improvement, SSOS tools are designed to enhance a district's ability to improve the effectiveness of its programs and strategies for providing support to low-performing schools. The SSOS also recognizes high performing Title I schools. The School and District Accountability Design Team is tasked with developing a new SSOS which serves all Wisconsin schools.

TITLE I: Title I is the act within the NCLB legislation which is designed to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students (e.g., low-income, migrant, neglected). The act "aims to "ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments."

The United States Department of Education (USDE) administers funds to states, who then administer funds to districts with large populations of low income students. Districts then allocate funds to schools with the highest proportion of low income students as a means to supplement educational programs. The supplemental services aim to improve achievement for struggling students. USDE requires states to hold Title I schools accountable for their performance, both as an aggregate and across subgroup populations (see *accountability*). Currently, Wisconsin's system of accountability and system of support only serve Title I schools. The School and District Design Team is tasked with developing a system of accountability that serves and supports all Wisconsin schools, not just Title I schools.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: The United States Department of Education (USED) is the federal agency responsible for distributing Title I funds to states and monitoring the performance of Title I schools as part of NCLB.

Acronyms

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| ACTE: | Association for Career and Technical Education |
| AIR: | American Institutes for Research |
| AP: | Advanced Placement |
| AS: | Advanced Standing |
| AYP: | Adequate Yearly Progress |
| BI: | Business Intelligence tool |
| CAPP: | Cooperative Academic Partnerships Program |
| CCR: | College and Career Readiness |
| CCSS: | Common Core State Standards |
| CCSSO: | Council of Chief State School Officers |
| CESA: | Cooperative Educational Service Agency |
| CII: | Center for Innovation and Improvement |
| CLEP: | College Level Examination Program |
| CPT: | College Placement Test |
| CTE: | Career and Technical Education |
| DIFI: | District Identified for Improvement |
| DP: | Diploma Program |
| DPI: | Department of Public Instruction |
| ED: | <i>(see USED)</i> |
| ELA: | English Language Arts |
| ELL: | English Language Learners <i>(also see LEP)</i> |
| ESEA: | Elementary and Secondary Education Act |
| ESL: | English as a Second Language |
| FAY: | Full Academic Year |
| FRL: | Free and Reduced Lunch |
| GPA: | Grade Point Average |
| IB: | International Baccalaureate |
| IHE: | Institutions of Higher Education |
| LEA: | Local Education Agency |
| LEP: | Limited English Proficient <i>(also see ELL)</i> |
| LDS: | Longitudinal Data System |
| MYP: | Middle Years Program |
| NACEP: | National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships |
| NAEP: | National Assessment of Educational Progress |
| NCLB: | No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 |
| NGA: | National Governors Association |
| NSC: | National Student Clearinghouse |
| OEA: | Office of Educational Accountability |
| PLTW: | Project Lead the Way |
| PTA: | Parent/Teacher Association |
| PTO: | Parent/Teacher Organization |

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| PYP: | Primary Years Program |
| RTI: | Response to Intervention |
| SAT: | College entrance exam |
| SBAC: | SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium |
| SEA: | State Education Agency |
| SES: | Socioeconomic status |
| SES: | Supplemental education services |
| SGP: | Student Growth Percentiles |
| SIFI: | School Identified for Improvement |
| SIS: | Student Information System |
| SSOS: | Statewide System of Support |
| STEM: | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| SwD: | Students with Disabilities |
| TC: | Transcripted Credit |
| USED: | United States Education Department |
| VAM: | Value Added Models |
| VARC: | Value-Added Research Center |
| WCER: | Wisconsin Center for Education Research |
| WINSS: | Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools |
| WKCE: | Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam |
| WTCS: | Wisconsin Technical College System |
| YA: | Youth Apprenticeship |