

Accountability Reform Overview

This overview describes the changes to Wisconsin's accountability system outlined in the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) waiver proposal for ESEA flexibility.

ESEA Flexibility Waiver

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has offered states the opportunity to apply for flexibility on certain provisions of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, currently known as NCLB, the No Child Left Behind Act). States' proposals must demonstrate how they will use this flexibility to implement the following principles:

- College- and career-ready expectations for all students,
- State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support,
- Support for effective instruction and leadership, and
- Reduced duplication and unnecessary burden.

DPI posted a draft waiver proposal on January 23 to elicit feedback over a two-week public comment period, after which DPI refined the proposal for submission to USED on February 22, 2012. Ongoing work with the US Department of Education has prompted additional clarifications to the waiver document. Accountability and other changes affecting schools and districts are included in this overview. Some specific changes or plans included in the final draft that are a direct response to stakeholder input are below:

- In addition to raising the mathematics and science credit requirements needed for graduation, DPI is advocating for 6.5 elective credits as a graduation requirement across the state, so that art, music, world languages, and technical courses may be a part of every student's high school experience. This is critical to Wisconsin teachers and families, and was a key finding of WEAC's *Speak Out for Wisconsin Public Schools*.
- In order that more students are recognized and included in this accountability system, and to avoid the masking of small subgroup performance, DPI will change the cell size used for accountability calculations from 40 to 20. This was a priority for the disability advocacy groups in Wisconsin. Additionally, a combined subgroup will be used when at least two of the binary subgroups (ELL, SwD, economically disadvantaged) do not meet cell size but when combined do meet cell size, in recognition of the need to closely monitor the performance of these traditionally high-needs student groups.
- DPI will continue to incorporate Universal Design for Learning principles into planning and development of resources for standards implementation, assessments, and instructional practices.
- DPI will raise cut scores on current assessments to reflect higher expectations for students during the two-year transition between current and next generation assessment systems. DPI

will also propose funding to make the ACT suite available across the state, a specific request from school administrators.

- DPI confirmed support for the plans to waive Supplemental Educational Services (SES) from the current accountability system.
- In serving Focus Schools, DPI will significantly increase the capacity of Wisconsin's Rtl Center to ensure a high quality, multi-level system of support, including additional interventions/supports for students with disabilities and English language learners.

College and career ready expectations for all students

Expanding upon "Every Child a Graduate" to ensure Wisconsin graduates are prepared for success in college and career, DPI is raising expectations and making changes to assessment and graduation requirements.

Standards & Assessments

- **Full implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE):** Instruction based on CCSS and CCEE (alternate achievement standards) must be in place by the 2014-15 school year. Assessment of CCSS and CCEE proficiency will begin in the 2014-15 school year.
- **New Assessment Systems:** Proficiency on CCSS will be measured by new assessment systems being developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (replacing the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination [WKCE]). Proficiency on the CCEE will be measured by the Dynamic Learning Maps Assessment (replacing the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities [WAA-SwD]). Both assessments will be field tested in 2013-14 and required statewide in 2014-15. Beginning in 2014-15, these state assessments will move from fall to spring, and the high school assessment will move from grade 10 to grade 11. Both assessments will be given in grades 3-8 and 11. These online assessment systems will include end-of-year tests, as well as additional resources to help benchmark student progress throughout the year.
- **Raised Expectations:** The proficiency levels on the Smarter Balanced assessment will be benchmarked against national and international standards. As a transition, the WKCE will use cut scores based on the more rigorous NAEP scale to calculate proficiency in reading and mathematics.
 - 2011-12: Current WKCE cut scores for proficiency remain in place for student-level reporting. DPI will begin the process to convert WKCE cut scores, working collaboratively with DPI's Technical Advisory Committee and testing vendor to field test NAEP-based cut scores on the WKCE. NAEP-based benchmarks will be applied for initial accountability calculations and provided on new school report cards.
 - 2012-13: NAEP-based cut scores applied to all WKCE test results including student-level individual performance reports and accountability report cards in spring 2013.
 - The cut score change does not apply to the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD). WAA-SwD data are still included in accountability calculations.
- **College and Career Readiness:** DPI is proposing use of the EXPLORE-PLAN-ACT + WorkKeys package (the ACT suite) and will request funds in the Wisconsin 2013-15 biennial budget to support administration of these assessments statewide. The data gathered from these

assessments enable academic growth to be measured throughout high school. Results also inform students, parents, and educators about the extent to which students are on-track for college and career. These assessments are supplemental to the 11th grade Smarter Balanced assessment, which will be used to measure proficiency on the CCSS beginning in 2014-15.

- **English Language Proficiency:** DPI and World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), housed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, lead a consortium to develop a new English language proficiency assessment for English Language Learners (ELLs). The project, *Assessment Services Supporting ELLs through Technology Systems (ASSETS)*, will develop an online assessment system that measures student progress in attaining the English language skills needed to be successful in K-12 and postsecondary studies, and work. ASSETS will replace the ACCESS for ELLs assessment currently used in Title III accountability in 2015-16.

Graduation Requirements

- Pending state legislation, graduation requirements will increase to include these specified 15 credits:
 - 4 credits of English language arts
 - 3 credits of mathematics (an increase from two credits)
 - 3 credits of science, engineering or technology with two of those years as traditional science or science equivalency courses (an increase from two credits)
 - 3 credits of social studies
 - 1.5 credits of physical education
 - 0.5 credit of health education
- In addition, DPI recommends putting into statute an additional 6.5 elective credits for graduation, as recommended by the State Superintendent last year. DPI also recommends that innovative dual enrollment programs be increased.
- These recommended requirements would result in a total of 21.5 credits necessary for graduation, in alignment with national averages and current local practice. This is a floor requirement as many districts will continue to require more credits, and most graduates will complete more credits than the new requirement in statute.
- These requirements will be in effect for students in the four-year adjusted cohort expected to graduate in 2016-17, pending legislation.

State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support

With the goal of developing a statewide accountability system that increases student achievement and promotes and supports school improvement across the state, DPI worked with a statewide school accountability design team, other stakeholders, and the Technical Advisory Committee to establish accountability measures that 1) are fair; 2) raise expectations; and 3) provide meaningful measures to inform differentiated recognitions, intervention, and support.

Comprehensive Statewide Accountability System

- Wisconsin's accountability system will include all public schools. This includes Title I schools, non-Title I schools; and district, non-district, and non-instrumentality charter schools.

Accountability Index

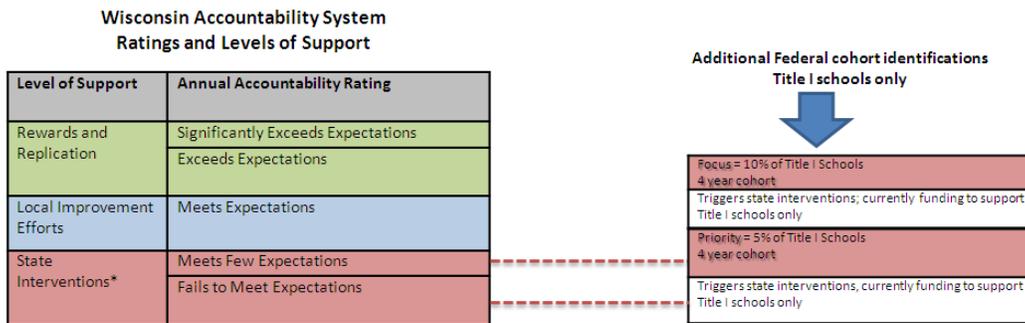
- Beginning in 2011-12, a comprehensive accountability index will replace the current ESEA Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) system. The index approach uses multiple measures and classifies schools along a continuum of performance.
- Schools and districts will be held accountable for outcomes in four priority areas that comprise sub-scales of the index:
 - Student achievement
 - Student growth
 - Closing achievement gaps
 - On-track to graduation and postsecondary readiness
- Index scores will be provided for each of the four sub-scale areas.
- Index scores may be reduced because of Red Flags signifying poor performance in three other areas. Schools or districts failing to meet minimum expectations in the following areas will receive deductions to index scores.
 - Test Participation (elementary, middle, high school) – Test participation rates falling below an acceptable level detrimentally affects the comparability of a school’s assessment results. The expectation is for each school to have a minimum test performance rate of 95%.
 - Dropout rates (middle and high school) – Regardless of school performance, high dropout rates run counter to the goal of graduating all students prepared for college and careers through improving academic performance and retention. The expectation is for each school to have a maximum dropout rate of 6%.
 - Absenteeism (elementary, middle, high school) – Absenteeism is highly correlated with low performance; if students are not in school they do not have access to important content and instruction. This indicator compares the attendance of a school’s students against a standard set by DPI that reflects the relationship between poor attendance and poor student performance. The expectation is for each school to have a maximum absenteeism rate of 13%.
- Overall accountability scores will be a combination of priority area scores, adjusted for Red Flag deductions, on an index of 0-100.

State Accountability Ratings

- Accountability index scores (0-100) will place schools and districts into one of five categories along the performance continuum:
 - Significantly Exceeds Expectations
 - Exceeds Expectations
 - Meets Expectations
 - Meets Few Expectations
 - Fails to Meet Expectations
- These ratings will be reported annually in the School Report Card, and will drive supports.

Federal Accountability Ratings

- In addition to the state accountability ratings, the waiver includes a requirement to identify two types of Title I schools. Title I is a federal funding stream for low income students. In 2011-12, the state will identify Priority Schools and Focus Schools for four year cohorts.
 - Priority Schools: 5% of all Title I schools with the lowest reading and mathematics performance in the state
 - Focus Schools: 10% of all Title I schools with the largest average subgroup gaps in reading, mathematics, or graduation rate; *or* with the lowest average subgroup performance in the state.
- These Title I schools will be required to implement interventions that address the reason for identification and have four years to demonstrate sustained improvements to student achievement.



*The placement of state interventions as a level of support reflects the long-term vision for a statewide accountability system that supports all schools. Currently, federal Title I funding is available only to support Focus, Priority, and Title I Reward schools.

Note: Labels, in combination with comprehensive report cards, are intended to provide schools with information that will guide local improvement efforts and inform state intervention planning.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

- AMOs are required by USED as part of Wisconsin’s waiver request. AMOs are annual goals for all students and subgroups in reading, mathematics, and graduation.
- New AMOs will be used beginning in 2011-12, with 2010-11 serving as the baseline year during which the AMOs were established. The AMOs are annual increases for all students and each subgroup for the next six years.
- AMOs were established using 2010-11 proficiency rates (reflecting NAEP-based cut scores) of the schools at the 90th percentile. All students and each subgroup will be expected to make annual improvement toward reaching that level of performance in six years, with a minimum 1% improvement each year.
- The AMOs expect higher levels of growth for students performing at lower levels of achievement, consistent with Wisconsin’s goal of reducing the achievement gap between student groups.
- School performance on the AMOs will be included in the report card but are not factored into a school’s accountability index score or accountability rating.
- Exit criteria for Priority and Focus schools will be tied to AMOs.

Subgroup Accountability

- A cell size of 20 students will be used for all accountability calculations, a change from 40 students. Reducing the cell size to 20 allows schools, districts, and the state to identify subgroups that may be struggling but would not be reported under larger cell size rules.
- A high-need supergroup that includes at least 20 students from the economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students with disabilities subgroups will be applied only in cases in which at least two of these subgroups do not alone have the minimum group size of 20, but when combined, do meet cell size. This recognizes the importance of closely monitoring the needs of these groups and allows more schools to be included in accountability calculations.
- The accountability index is designed to emphasize the performance of every subgroup. The four sub-scale areas and index will prevent small subgroup performances from being masked.
- Report cards will include subgroup performance to increase transparency.

Assessment in Accountability Reporting

Year	Assessment	Role in accountability reporting
2011-12	<i>WKCE</i>	Current <i>WKCE</i> performance levels used for press release & individual student performance reports; NAEP-based performance levels used for initial school accountability report cards.
2012-13	<i>WKCE</i>	NAEP-based performance benchmarks used for <i>WKCE</i> student performance reports and school & district accountability report cards.
2013-14	<i>WKCE</i> <i>Smarter Balanced</i> and <i>Dynamic Learning Maps</i>	Continue using NAEP-based performance benchmarks for accountability report cards. Field test <i>Smarter Balanced</i> and <i>Dynamic Learning Maps</i> assessments and define performance benchmarks to be used across <i>all</i> participating states.
2014-15	<i>Smarter Balanced</i> and <i>Dynamic Learning Maps</i>	Fully implement <i>Smarter Balanced</i> and <i>Dynamic Learning Maps</i> assessments with consortia-defined performance benchmarks. Results used for accountability report cards.

District Accountability

- Currently, district accountability is based on the aggregate of all district students within three separate levels: elementary, middle, and high school. This will continue, with an accountability index score calculated for each of the levels.
- The district AMO is to have at least one of the three aggregate levels—elementary, middle or high school—in the *Meets Expectations* category or higher—and to have no individual school in the *Fails to Meet Expectations* category.

- The district will miss the AMO if its aggregate scores for all three levels fall below the *Meets Expectations* category, or if it has any individual school in the *Fails to Meet Expectations* category.
- For districts missing the AMO, the state superintendent may require that a district-level diagnostic review be completed to evaluate critical systems and structures within the central office, including but not limited to human resources, curriculum and instruction, finance, and leadership.
- District-level report cards will be provided following the 2012-13 school year.

Support and Intervention

- Overall Approach
 - DPI will identify both high and low performing schools, but will focus interventions and supports on the lowest performing schools in the state.
 - Support and interventions will match the severity and duration of identified problems.
 - Districts will remain the entry point for school improvement and district reform.
 - DPI will establish one statewide system of support for all publicly-funded schools, pending state funding. This replaces the current system, which only is funded by federal Title I dollars and, therefore, only requires interventions of the lowest-performing Title I schools.
 - Resources will be electronically available to all schools in the state that wish to conduct a self-assessment to establish a plan for continuous improvement.
 - Supports will include online resources, and technical assistance from the Wisconsin Response to Intervention (RtI) Center, CESAs, and DPI staff.
- Priority Schools
 - For 2012-13, the lowest performing Title I schools, as determined by achievement scores within the accountability index, comprising at least 5% of all Title I schools in the state will be identified as Priority Schools.
 - Beginning in fall 2012, Title I schools will no longer have to implement NCLB mandated Supplemental Education Services (SES) or provide students the opportunity to transfer to a higher-performing district school using Title I funds for transportation.
 - Instead, Title I Priority Schools will have the following options:
 - Contract with a state-approved turnaround partner to conduct a comprehensive, on-site diagnostic review of instructional policies, structures, and practices to identify potential barriers to student outcomes. Informed by the findings of the review, the school must develop a reform plan, which emphasizes improvements in the core instruction of reading and mathematics, in collaboration with their turnaround partner. The plans must be submitted to and approved by DPI. Schools must continue to work with the turnaround partner to implement reform plans.

- Reform plans must include specific onsite interventions, such as extended learning time, targeted reading and mathematics supports, professional development and implementation assistance.
- DPI will conduct site visits, as well as reviews of data, implementation of reform plans, and budgets, as part of ongoing monitoring of reform implementation.
- Closure.
 - The state superintendent may intervene and direct specific actions for schools failing to show demonstrable improvement after four years.
- Focus Schools
 - For 2012-13, Title I schools that show large gaps in reading scores, mathematics scores, or graduation rates between subgroups or low performance by high need subgroups, as determined by index calculations, will be identified as Focus Schools. Focus Schools will comprise at least 10% of all Title I schools in the state.
 - Title I Focus Schools must participate in an online state-directed self assessment of the current core reading and math curriculum including interventions for struggling students. The school must develop an improvement plan based on the self assessment, and implement Response to Intervention (RtI). Specific interventions in the plan must address identified problem areas. The plan must be approved by DPI.
 - Supports will include online resources and technical assistance from the Wisconsin Response to Intervention (RtI) Center, Cooperative Education Service Agencies (CESAs), and DPI staff.
 - DPI will conduct electronic reviews of each school's progress throughout the year.
 - The state superintendent may intervene and direct specific actions for schools failing to show demonstrable improvement after four years.

School Recognition and Rewards

- The top performing schools will receive public recognition.
- The state will reward high performing and high progress schools in order to highlight student achievement and student growth.
- The state will identify a small sample of high performing schools to serve as models of best practices which can be shared and replicated statewide, particularly with those schools not meeting expectations.

Support for effective instruction and leadership

The primary purpose of the Wisconsin Framework for Educator Effectiveness is to develop a system of continuous improvement of educator practice—from pre-service through service— that leads to improved student learning. The system established by the Educator Effectiveness Design Team was designed to evaluate teachers and principals through a fair, valid, and reliable process using multiple measures across two main areas: educator practice and student outcomes.

- All public school teachers and principals will be included in the evaluation system.
- Both principal and teacher evaluations will include multiple measures of educator practice and student outcomes. Educator practice will count for half of the evaluation; student outcomes will count for half of the evaluation.
- The evaluation system will include formative and summative elements, and will link directly to the educator’s professional growth plan.
- The system will be fully implemented in the state by the 2014-15 school year.
- Individual educator ratings are confidential and will not be publicly reported.

Reduced duplication and unnecessary burden

DPI is aligning a number of efforts to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on districts. District data collection will be streamlined as a result of the transition to a statewide student information system (SSIS). Methods of making data available directly to districts, as well as to the public, will be localized and made more timely through the SSIS and a new reporting system called the Wisconsin Information System for Education dashboard (WISEdash).

- **Single Statewide Student Information System:** There is a five-year implementation timeline for districts to transition to a single student information system, which will reduce duplication of reporting efforts, increase timeliness of data access, and allow districts more time to focus on using data to inform important educational decisions.
- **Single Reporting System:** WISEdash, a single reporting system for school/district accountability reporting, will include a plethora of pre-defined and user-defined reports including student growth percentiles, enrollment, course-taking, postsecondary enrollment, literacy, and more. WISEdash will be released initially in secure format only (i.e., for authorized district personnel to use via a login); eventually WISEdash will also house public reports and replace DPI’s current public data reporting systems.
- **Consolidated Reporting Requirements:** School- and district-required performance reports will eventually be replaced by new school and district report cards, allowing these reporting requirements to be met without the need for districts to create separate reports.



Stakeholder Involvement

- **Involvement during Development:** Changes to Wisconsin’s accountability system described in this document are the result of much deliberation and collaboration with stakeholders. The work of the School & District Accountability Design Team, as well as input from various educational stakeholders, informed the design of this new accountability system. DPI will continue to engage stakeholders throughout the state as this system develops.
- **Public Survey:** The DPI survey that accompanied the waiver draft request during the two-week public comment period resulted in input and guidance from over 700 respondents including educators, parents and other key education stakeholders. Survey results were utilized to clarify and modify the waiver request.
- **Ongoing communication:** The DPI will continue to develop support materials, presentations, and webinars to ensure key education stakeholders stay informed as the accountability system continues to evolve. These resources will be available on the Accountability Reform webpage: <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/acct/accountability.html>.