



# Office of Educational Accountability

May 2007

## Building Assessment Literacy...

### What do WKCE scores tell me about a student?

#### How does the student's performance compare to other students?

The WKCE Individual Profile Report (IPR) includes information about how a student ranks compared to other grade-level students in the state. If a student has a percentile rank of 40%, this indicates that 60% of the students performed at a higher level on the exam. Depending on the subject and grade level, performance at the 40th percentile may or may not be classified as meeting grade-level standards, as each subject and grade are calculated independently. Remember, with norm-referenced data only 50% of students will be "above average," but students below the "average" may still be performing just fine for the given grade level. (Ex.: If 100 students correctly answered between 90%-100% of a test, the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile might mean an overall score of 94%.) This norm-referenced piece of information should not be viewed in isolation; rather, it should be considered along with information about the overall performance level of the student.

Just as a lower percentile ranking could still indicate proficiency if a high percentage of students are proficient, a higher percentile ranking does not necessarily indicate "giftedness" or proficiency on content beyond the grade level. The WKCE is designed to distinguish whether or not a student has grade-level knowledge and skills, so the majority of the items reflect the cut-point between Basic and Proficient performance. The WKCE does not have as much precision at the top and the bottom of the range of possible performance. A student performing at the top on the WKCE is doing well with grade-level work. Because the WKCE does not ask questions above the grade level, it cannot determine the grade-level at which a student is performing – it does not ask questions above or below the grade level.

#### How well is the student doing with grade-level academic content?

While percentile rank is a worthwhile piece of information, it is secondary to the achievement standard (Minimal Performance, Basic, Proficient, Advanced) which is the primary piece of information that is reported for the WKCE. The achievement standards were set by groups of Wisconsin educators who carefully considered the test items to determine what performance should be for each achievement level. Proficiency categories are defined as:

<b>Advanced</b>	Demonstrates <i>in-depth understanding of the academic knowledge and skills</i> tested on the WKCE for that grade level
<b>Proficient</b>	Demonstrates <i>competency in the academic knowledge and skills</i> tested on the WKCE for that grade level
<b>Basic</b>	Demonstrates <i>some academic knowledge and skills</i> tested on the WKCE for that grade level
<b>Minimal Performance</b>	Demonstrates <i>very limited academic knowledge and skills</i> tested on the WKCE for that grade level

Students who are classified as Proficient or Advanced on the exam were deemed to be meeting the grade level standards at the time of testing. Students who are classified as Basic or Minimal Performance were performing below grade-level expectations at the time of testing. The WKCE is only one of the many tools that schools are using to evaluate the performance of students. The WKCE should not be used as the only indicator of determining whether or not a student needs remediation, enrichment, or advancement. Used together with other local assessment strategies and with consideration of the student's classroom performance, it can serve as one useful piece of information in making decisions about a student's educational program.