

# Office of Educational Accountability

Newsletter - Issue IV, November 2007

## OEA Updates...

### Successful Administration of the 2007-08 WKCE

DPI would like to thank everyone for their time and effort in the successful administration of the Fall 2007 WKCE. The Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) staff appreciate the phone calls and emails from schools and districts asking for clarification, providing comments, and reporting irregularities. Your attention to administrative detail and awareness of test security before, during, and after testing helps ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill. We know how much work this is for schools and districts, and appreciate all that you do.

### Student Reports Arrive Earlier This Year

As part of DPI's ongoing effort to send test results out to schools faster, student Individual Profile Reports (IPR) should arrive two weeks earlier than in past years. IPRs should be distributed to parents as soon as the districts receive them. Many districts include an explanatory letter with the IPR when it is sent home. Listed below are a few key points about the IPR report, test results, and the WKCE.

1. The interpretive information for the IPR is printed on the back of the report. An Administrator's Interpretive Guide will be on the OEA webpage.
2. Proficiency "Cut-Scores" are the same as last year. They are based on input from Wisconsin educators, business people, and parents.
3. The report is criterion-referenced; it shows how well the student is doing at reaching proficiency. The goal is that all students should reach proficiency.
4. Standards Performance Indices (SPIs) are provided as an estimate of student performance within a subject area.
5. A state percentile is provided to determine how each student did relative to other test takers in the state. A lower percentile might still indicate proficiency, if the majority of students in that grade level are proficient.
6. Since 2006-07, WKCE has been administered to all English Language Learner students.
7. The new WAA-SwD is a performance task assessment (unlike the portfolio assessment administered during prior years) that will be administered January 2008, to students with significant cognitive disability.

## OEA Calendar...

### Assessment Windows for 2007 - 08

October 8 – December 14	Testing window for NAEP Long Term Trend for 13-year-olds
December 3 – February 15	Testing window for the ACCESS for ELLs®
January 7 – January 31	Testing window for the WAA-SwD
January 7 – March 14	Testing window for NAEP Long Term Trend for 9-year-olds
January 28 – March 7	Testing window for NAEP Field Testing grades 4, 8, and 12 Testing window for NAEP Arts assessment grade 8
March 17 – May 23	Testing window for NAEP Long Term Trend for 17-year-olds

### Other Important Dates

November 26, 4:00 PM	Deadline to review and revise all ISES records before lockdown
December 3	Deadline for DACs to arrange for pick up of WKCE test materials
January 7	Record Editing System (RES) training available online
January 9 – January 18	Record Editing System Window

### Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (WAA-SwD)

Preparation of the WAA-SwD is moving ahead at a fast and efficient pace for the January 7-31, 2008 test window. Teachers are allowed to start administering this assessment when all materials arrive in their districts. DACs should receive materials during the week of December 17<sup>th</sup>. (continued)

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Training for the administration of the WAA-SwD was conducted as a "Training of Trainers" during the month of October. Eighteen trainings were administered across the state. This training may also be viewed via a Mediasite presentation on the OEA webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/waa/html>. Also on the webpage are ancillary training materials, including the PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes.

This is a secure test which must be kept in a locked location when not in use. Districts will be required to return all test materials to CTB including the answer document and both the student and teacher test books. Districts are not to retain any copies. DPI and the CESAs will retain a copy for teacher and/or parent review after the testing window.

## English Language Learner Translations

With the 2007 WKCE testing window complete, DPI is asking for feedback on both the written and oral Spanish and Hmong translations which were made available to districts as an accommodation this year. OEA will distribute a short survey to DACs in December for all educators who worked with the accommodation. We ask that you encourage your staff to complete the survey. Results from the survey will help DPI address the needs of this student population and the districts that serve them. We look forward to your feedback.

## ACCESS for ELLs® Assessment

Students in Wisconsin who qualify as English language learners, according to state criteria, are required to take the ACCESS for ELLs® assessment. This is a federal Title III requirement regardless of a student's enrollment in an ELL program.

The ACCESS for ELLs® test materials will arrive in districts the week of November 26<sup>th</sup>. The testing window for students participating in the ACCESS for ELLs® is December 2-February 15. This window has been set to allow teachers ample administration time. This is Wisconsin's third year administering ACCESS and our educators have continued to have a substantial impact on the direction of this assessment. Educators have participated in Item content/bias reviews, cut score reviews, manuscript reviews, and alignment studies. DPI would like to thank Wisconsin educators for their commitment to improving assessment for English language learners.

## ISES Deadline

The Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES) review and revision period closed on November 26. By now districts should have previewed draft progress and summary reports, corrected remaining errors, addressed any unacknowledged warnings, and locked and submitted final district data. The final locked data will be used to update Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) demographics. Districts will have one final opportunity to review WSAS student demographics during the January Record Editing System window.

## Record Editing System Window

DPI and CTB will provide districts with an opportunity to review student demographics and testing status during the WSAS Record Editing System (RES) window from 8:00am January 9 until noon on January 18. As part of an effort to get score reports to districts earlier this year, WKCE results will not be included in RES. A recorded training session on using RES will be available online prior to January 7, 2008. Data finalized in RES will be the source for all WKCE reporting. There will be no RES window for the WAA-SwD; therefore, any corrections to demographic information for students taking the alternate assessment must be made during the January 9-18 RES window.

## National Assessment of Educational Progress

This year approximately 70 Wisconsin schools are participating in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This test is used as a benchmark to compare Wisconsin performance to other states, or to gather national trends. The assessments for the 2007-08 school year include Long-Term Trend NAEP, Science Interactive Computer Test, Arts Assessment, and Reading and Math field testing. NAEP 2007 results are available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/profile.asp>.



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**“What happens to the tests after they leave the district?”**

The test boxes are sent to a scoring facility in Indiana. There is a defined window of time in December when all 445,000 WKCE tests are scanned. After that window, the scanners must be reset for another state's test, so it is critical that all districts ship their boxes on time. Each district's tests are sorted, counted, and scanned separately. If there are any abnormalities such as page defects, or if the scanner cannot distinguish a clear answer on a multiple choice item, then the scanner flags that test, and a human operator looks at the actual test book to address the problem.

The electronic file separates the constructed response hand-written items that are scored by human scorers. These electronic screen-shots of the actual student handwritten responses are scored by college-degreed scorers trained specifically on all possible correct responses for that item. The range of possible answers and score points are determined by a group of Wisconsin teachers who review actual student responses during the field-testing phase and who approve the training materials used by the scorers. Each scorer is trained on only a few test items, and their scoring is continually checked by supervisors to assure that it is in line with the approved scoring guide. If a student's writing is not clear, the scorer can adjust the contrast to sharpen it. If the scorer still cannot read it, the actual test book is pulled from the warehouse and is reviewed by hand to determine the student's intent. Over three million WKCE constructed response test items are hand-scored in this way each year.

While hand-scoring is being completed in January, districts are reviewing student demographic records in the Record Editing System (RES) to assure that all students have been assigned correctly to their schools and districts so accountability determinations will be accurate. No actual student scores are present in the system during RES. After RES closes, individual district issues are addressed to assure records are accurate, and scoring is completed. Preliminary reports are reviewed for accuracy. In late February, student score reports are sent to districts. During the spring, individual report records are combined into school and district detailed reports, and are posted to the TurnLeaf website. Districts have about four weeks to review all results prior to the state WKCE press release and the public posting of data on the WINSS website in late May.

## FAQ...Shipping and Packing Test Materials

- Q. What should I do if we've already shipped our boxes and we have one or more tests that didn't get included in the shipment?**  
If there are some test books left out after shipping, you must register through the online retrieval system for test-box pick-up again (do not use an envelope). The test vendor will make specific arrangements for pick-up of these test books in the same way as the other test books are handled. You should not mail them separately. Doing this may result in that test book not being scored.
- Q. How should I pack the tests if I have one or more test books with irregularities?**  
All test books with irregularities should be banded with a completed special handling flyer (which is included in the TCK). After packing the rest of the test books, place these special handling materials above the stack of test books under the school header sheet. You should then go through the online retrieval system for pick up of test materials.
- Q. When packing test books, must we use the bands and boxes that are provided?**  
Yes. You must use the bands and boxes provided. The bands are specifically selected for their size, strength, and durability. Rubber bands or other types of bands may damage test books and make them difficult to score. The boxes are specific to Wisconsin and make it easier to track all of Wisconsin test materials.
- Q. What should I do to show that I shipped all of my boxes?**  
Be sure that a staff member is present when boxes are picked up and that every box has been accounted for on the shipping document. Retain a copy of the receipt verifying the number of boxes shipped.

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## Building Assessment Literacy... "What is Balanced Assessment?"

Assessment is an integral part of instruction, providing information about how well students are progressing toward state standards. Standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are interwoven in the learning process, and each informs the others. Standards are the *what* – they define what we expect students to know and be able to do. Curriculum is the *how* – it defines a body of learning experiences that are designed to reach the standards. Instruction is the *in what ways* – it provides the specific learning experiences and ways of differentiating those experiences to scaffold student learning. Assessment is the *how well* – it gauges the attainment of learning to inform instructional practices and curriculum. A balanced approach to assessment includes a continuum of strategies within a range of frequency and purpose.

*Formative assessment* occurs continuously in the classroom, both within and between lessons. Information is used to adjust teaching strategies. Students receive frequent and meaningful feedback on their performances. Examples of formative assessment strategies include teacher observation, discussion, questioning, and non-graded class work. The focus of formative assessment is to determine what learning comes next for a student.

*Benchmark assessment* occurs within, between, and among instructional units. Information is used to identify strengths and gaps in curriculum and instruction. Grade-level curriculum may be refined, and teachers may modify instruction for student groups based on their progress. These assessments might be teacher-developed or district-developed products, or they may be purchased commercially. When using a commercial product, it is important to examine the types of questions used and the links to state standards. Examples of benchmark assessments include midterm and end-of-unit assessments, district-wide assessments such as 6-Trait® writing, specific reading inventories, or products such as MAP®, SCANTRON®, or ThinkLink™. The focus of benchmark assessment is to determine how student groups are progressing or how well a program is working.

*Large-scale assessment* occurs annually or less-frequently. Information is used to develop strategic, long-term evaluation of curriculum and programming based on trends over time, and to monitor state, district, and school progress. Assessment instruments and procedures are standardized so that comparisons can be made across student groups. Examples of large-scale assessment include the WKCE®, WAA-SwD®, ACT®, SAT®, NAEP™, and AP® exams. The focus of large-scale assessment is to determine how schools, districts, and states are progressing.

These assessment strategies provide information at differing intervals and for different purposes. Each one provides a different perspective, and one cannot take the place of another. Together, they provide a balanced approach to assessment that informs decisions at the classroom, school, district, state, and national levels. Balanced assessment handout available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/dacnwlttrs.html>.

Ongoing Teacher Evaluation Strategies	Periodic Benchmark Assessments	Large-Scale Assessments
Daily/Ongoing Student-Centered Formative	Monthly/Quarterly Classroom/School-Centered Interim	Annual District/State-Centered Summative

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