

Office of Educational Accountability

Newsletter - Issue VI, May 2008

OEA Updates...

WAA-SwD Update

Looking ahead to next year's administration of the WAA-SwD, we want to remind districts of the decision process for determining the appropriate assessment for their students. Participation in the WAA-SwD is an IEP team decision. The IEP team must go through the checklist and determine if the student is working toward Extended Grade Band Standard expectations, or working toward the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. The IEP team must decide which set of standards the student is working toward, and then determine if the student participates in either the WAA-SwD or the WKCE – with or without accommodations. Next year, students will take either all parts of the WAA-SwD or all parts of the WKCE. Please remind the Special Education Director in your district about the revised checklist which is available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/doc/form-i7a.doc>.

The format of the WAA-SwD for reading, mathematics, and science will remain a performance task assessment. Social studies and language arts/writing will be assessed using a rater form. Over the summer these forms will be updated with educator involvement. In addition, educators will be involved in a workshop intended to add additional instructional descriptors to the Extended Grade Band Standards. Please contact Sandy Berndt if your district is interested in participating at 608-266-1875 or sandra.berndt@dpi.wi.gov. Please note that the testing window for the 2008-09 WAA-SwD will be the same as for the WKCE.

Remember to Update Your DAC Information

On May 1, DACs received an email regarding the annual update to DAC contact information and the WSAS Confidentiality Agreement. It is essential that each district complete and return these forms to the Office of Educational Accountability by May 31, 2008, even if the designated DAC stays the same. You can view/print these forms at <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/dacforms.html>.

ELL Update

Assessment of English language learners on the WKCE will remain consistent with the procedures of the 2007-08 administration. English language learners will be required to take the WKCE with allowable accommodations. Please see the ELL Decision Flowchart that shows how ELLs are counted for AYP and addresses the first-year-in-the-country status. This chart is available at: http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/pdf/ell_flowchart.pdf. The Department of Public Instruction will continue to make available Spanish and Hmong written translations for the WKCE in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and the directions for Reading and Language Arts. Districts who serve students who speak languages other than Spanish or Hmong may use qualified translators to provide written or oral translation support to students.

OEA Calendar...

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

June 6	Districts and schools receive DRAFT notification of <i>preliminary</i> improvement status: DIFI, SIFI, and AYP. A letter is sent ONLY if there is an AYP miss for 2007-08, or if the district's/school's improvement status changes.
June 24	Public release of <i>preliminary</i> DIFI, SIFI, and/or districts/schools missing AYP – summaries posted to http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/default.asp
June 29	AYP status is electronically available for every WI school and district. A three-year AYP review summary is posted to the web. DACs should print and distribute all district and school AYP sheets from the online reporting system (ORS) private PDF reports.
July 7	Deadline for districts and schools to prepare appeals and request reconsideration of their <i>preliminary</i> DIFI, SIFI, or AYP status.
July 8 – July 27	DPI processes DIFI, SIFI, and AYP reconsideration requests and notifies districts and schools of the results of these requests.
July 31	Final SIFI, DIFI, and AYP Status.

Terms: DIFI– District Identified for Improvement
SIFI– School Identified for Improvement
AYP– Adequate Yearly Progress

Other Important Dates

May 30	WSAS Press Release
May 31	Annual DAC update form and Confidentiality Agreement due from districts.
September 15	Braille/Large Print Order Forms Due.
October 6-10	Testing materials shipped to districts.
October 27 – November 28	WKCE and WAA-SwD Test Window – Testing should not begin prior to the testing window.

Office of Educational Accountability

Newsletter - Issue VI, May 2008

The ACCESS for ELLs™ results should have been distributed to all districts and clean-up of data should now be complete. Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) are calculated by the following:

AMAO 1 → Progress → ACCESS for ELLs
AMAO 2 → Attainment → ACCESS for ELLs
AMAO 3 → Title I AYP → WKCE/WAA-SwD

Districts must meet each of the required indicators to meet AMAOs. If one of the indicators is not met, then the district or consortium does not meet their AMAO. Only a district or consortia that misses the AMAO requirement will receive notification.

After AMAO determinations are disseminated, districts will have a 30-day appeal window.

The ACCESS for ELLs administration window for the 2008-09 administration will run from December 1, 2008 to February 13, 2009. Plan your testing to include all English language learners.

Changes to the Assessment Accommodations Matrix

The Assessment Accommodations Matrix is currently being revised. The 2008 update should be available in early June at <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/accom08.pdf>. The updated Accommodations Matrix will also appear in the 2008 DAC Guide. It describes allowable accommodations on the WKCE for students with disabilities, English language learners, and other students on an "as needed basis." The updated matrix will also include accommodations allowed on the WAA-SwD. In addition to a few new allowable accommodations, other revisions to the Accommodations Matrix include clarifications and some reorganization. The form to use to request accommodations not listed on the Accommodations Matrix is also being revised and renamed as the *Accommodations Request Form*.

It is important that schools and districts closely review the updated Accommodations Matrix. Schools and districts should monitor the use of accommodations to ensure that those listed on IEPs and 504 plans are consistent with those being provided in the classroom and during testing.

New to the Accommodations Matrix:

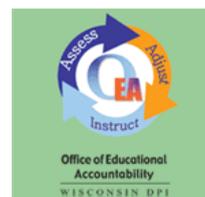
- Accommodations column for WAA-SwD (same as 2007-08)
- For students with visual impairments who are not yet proficient in contracted Braille, the WKCE Reading test may be read aloud to the student; for students not yet proficient in un-contracted Braille, the "Read by Student" items on the WAA-SwD may be read aloud to the student.
- Students may use tinted overlays.
- Students may read aloud to themselves in an individual setting (with no interaction with the test administrator).

- Students with disabilities in grades 3 and 4 may use a multiplication table (in the same manner as a calculator) on all sections except sections measuring computation skills.
- Students may record responses using an audio device for the Writing test and/or other tests, in an individual setting, and then listen to their own recording and transcribe their own response into the regular test book.

WKCE Update

The WKCE and WAA-SwD will be administered during the same test window of October 27- November 28, 2008. This will involve some shipping and packing changes. The following are the procedures currently planned for Fall 2008.

- WKCE and WAA-SwD test materials will be shipped separately to the school districts. All shipping will be during the week of October 6th. WKCE will ship first, followed by WAA later that week. All tests should be on site by Friday, October 10.
- WKCE test materials will be shipped to the districts and schools in the same manner as the prior administration. There is no change to how WKCE materials will be received.
- WAA-SwD test materials, NOT separated by schools, will be shipped to the DAC in each district. The DAC will sort test books based on what each school needs, and will then send the test materials to individual schools in that district. Number of books received by a district will be based on students tested with WAA-SwD last year, rolling those students forward one year, with an estimated number for grades 3 and 10. Approximately 10% overage will be provided to each district.
- The short-add process for both tests will be open from the time test books are received until the end of the test window.
- Completed WKCE and WAA-SwD test materials will be shipped together to the CTB scoring site. Complete information on the packing and shipping of test materials will be provided to school districts at the beginning of September through Mediasite and DAC email correspondence.



Office of Educational Accountability

Newsletter - Issue VI, May 2008



“What does a large scale assessment measure, and how can the results be used?”

For assessment to successfully drive change to educational practice, a variety of assessments need to be used in conjunction with each other.

Different types of assessments are used for different purposes. The WKCE is a large-scale assessment designed to provide a snapshot of how well a district or school is doing at helping all students reach proficiency on state standards, with a focus on school and district-level accountability. A large-scale,

summative assessment such as the WKCE is not designed to provide diagnostic information about individual students. Those assessments are best done at the local level, where immediate results can be obtained. Schools should not rely on only WKCE data to gauge progress of individual students or to determine effectiveness of programs or curriculum. It is one piece, but it is not designed to provide immediate feedback or detailed information about a student's needs – a diagnostic test is needed for that purpose.

The WKCE student IPR report is able to give an indication of whether or not a student has reached what Wisconsin educators have defined as “proficient” in a content area. This is done through a “standard setting” process where Wisconsin educators looked at all test items to determine cut points at each grade level. “Proficiency” is defined as the knowledge and skills a student needs at the beginning of that grade level to be successful on grade-level work. The WKCE is designed to determine exactly that. It is best at saying “Is this student proficient in mathematics?” – and while it gives an indicator of the relative strengths and weaknesses within mathematics, it cannot pinpoint a specific skill area within mathematics and diagnose where a student might be having difficulty. For instance, the IPR might indicate a relative weakness in geometry within mathematics, but it cannot pinpoint that “right angles” is what the student finds confusing. To do that, you need a test specifically designed to diagnose the skill deficiency. Think of the WKCE as having a coarser grain, and a diagnostic test instrument as having a finer grain.

The WKCE is a good indicator of whether or not a school or district is making adequate progress at moving all students to proficiency, and whether or not an individual student is meeting overall proficiency requirements in a content area. It asks only grade-level questions, not questions that are above and below grade level. If the test were to also include a more detailed diagnostic component with above and below-level questions, it would be significantly longer than the current WKCE test. Tests are designed for different purposes, and it is not possible for one test instrument to serve every purpose.

FAQ...

On Assessment

Why does it take so long to get test results?

Many steps happen between the time test books are returned and when reports are delivered. Immediately following the testing window, students' work is scored. In general the process includes: Shipping (2 weeks), Scoring (3-4 weeks), Statistical Analysis (2-3 weeks), District Data Correction (2 weeks), and State Level Data Correction CTB/DPI (2 weeks). The length of the scoring window is in part attributed to constructed response (CR) items. CR items require human scoring and, therefore, require a lengthier scoring period. In addition to these processes, results are carefully reviewed prior to the release of *Individual Profile Reports (IPR)*, *Online Reporting System (ORS)* data for district assessment coordinators, the public access data on *Wisconsin's Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS)*, and OEA data links at <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/data.html>.

How is the WKCE test scored?

The WKCE takes advantage of a statistical procedure known as “item response theory” (IRT) to evaluate scores. Each test question – or item – is treated independently. Unlike classroom tests, all items are not created equal, but are viewed as samples of the knowledge domain with varying difficulty. The IRT calculations do not weight questions per se, however, an incorrect answer on a difficult item does not affect scores as much as an incorrect answer on an easier item. Similarly answering a more challenging item correctly will have a greater effect on the overall score than answering a more challenging item incorrectly. For large-scale standardized tests, IRT scoring is a more accurate representation of students' knowledge of the content area than a simple percent-correct. For more information please go to <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/pdf/assessrsilt.pdf>.

Office of Educational Accountability

Newsletter - Issue VI, May 2008

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 40th 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:

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

OEA Contact Information...

Lynette Russell, Director
lynette.russell@dpi.wi.gov

Phil Olsen, Assistant Director
philip.olsen@dpi.wi.gov

Alison Colby, Statistics
alison.colby@dpi.wi.gov

Angela Dugas, Standards Consultant
angela.dugas@dpi.wi.gov

Susan Ketchum, Accountability/AYP
susan.ketchum@dpi.wi.gov

Viji Somasundaram, WKCE
visalakshi.somasundaram@dpi.wi.gov

Phil Cranley, Statistics/Reading First
philip.cranley@dpi.wi.gov

Brian Johnson, Alternate Assessment
brian.johnson@dpi.wi.gov

Melissa Olson, Statistics
melissa.olson@dpi.wi.gov

Jennifer Teasdale, Publishing/ Website
jennifer.teasdale@dpi.wi.gov

Duane Dorn, Standards Consultant
duane.dorn@dpi.wi.gov

Kristen Kehoe, WAA-SwD/ ELL
kristen.kehoe@dpi.wi.gov

Abby Potter, NAEP
aubree.potter@dpi.wi.gov

Tom S. Woznicki, Standards Consultant
thomas.woznicki@dpi.wi.gov

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, age, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital status or parental status, sexual orientation, or disability.