Every Child a Graduate
College and Career Ready

Higher Expectations

New College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the WKCE

Each year in Wisconsin, public school students in grades 3-8 and 10 take the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) for mathematics and reading. The results of these annual assessments provide vital information for students, parents, and educators.

Starting in the 2012-13 school year, Wisconsin is raising the benchmark scores needed for students to reach the proficient or advanced performance levels. These new college and career readiness proficiency levels are based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Wisconsin is on a rapid trajectory toward higher standards. This includes implementation of the Common Core State Standards, upgraded curriculum standards for students with disabilities and English language learners, and developing next-generation assessments. Raising the WKCE benchmarks is part of a strategic effort to ensure our children are ready for college and careers in today's rapidly changing, global society and economy.

Because of these benchmark score changes, WKCE results will show a significant decline in the number of students considered to be "proficient" or "advanced." This does not reflect a change in the abilities of students, but rather reflects the higher standards and aspirations we have for our students and schools.

Higher benchmarks have been established as a better measure of student progress toward being ready for college and careers.

The higher college and career readiness benchmarks will be reflected in Wisconsin's new school accountability system. Under this new system, students' performance levels will be balanced with indicators regarding student growth, closing gaps between groups of students, and keeping students on track to graduation and postsecondary readiness.

Adjusting to higher aspirations and expectations will take some time, but this is a necessary change for a worthy purpose: to elevate the achievement of our students and their schools. Together, we can all work to make sure every child graduates ready for college and career.

For more information go to:
dpi.wi.gov/oea/acct/accountability.html

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent