

**Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE)
Assessment and Accountability in the Fifty States: Survey 2000**

OKLAHOMA

This profile was verified by the staff of the Oklahoma Department of Education in May 2000. All information was current as of that date.

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State Assessment System (1999-2000 school year)

1. Provide a brief overview and history of the assessment system as the context.

The assessment system in Oklahoma is primarily based on the Oklahoma-developed criterion-referenced exams, which are still in the process of implementation. Until recently, Oklahoma also relied upon a norm-referenced assessment, but did not do so in 1999-2000.

2. What are the characteristics of the state assessment system, including:

- *Name of Assessment Instrument(s) or Program(s)* The Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests are administered annually. Oklahoma previously administered a norm-referenced assessment, but did not do so in 1999-2000.
- *Grade Levels and Subjects Tested*
 - Grade 5 – Reading, Writing, Math, Science, History Constitution and Government of US, Geography, Arts.
 - Grade 8 – same subjects
 - Grade 11 – a Geography criterion-referenced assessment is administered
 - Grade 9 – 12 End-of-Instruction – English, US History, Biology, Algebra (some in the implementation process).
- *Norm or Criterion Referenced* Currently only criterion-referenced.

- *Matrix or Census Testing Census*
- *Item Types (including proportions if available via Internet or interview) such as: traditional or enhanced multiple choice, performance tasks, open-ended questions, portfolios, essays, etc.* Most assessments are multiple choice; the writing assessment consists of an essay in response to a prompt.
- *Time of Testing (specific month(s) or testing window)* The writing assessment is administered mid-February, the remaining assessments are administered in late February.
- *High School Exit Exam (date of implementation and/or phase-in timeline)* Each student who completes the instruction for the specified secondary level competencies shall complete an end-of-instruction test in order to graduate from high school. The end-of-instruction tests are criterion-referenced, and students shall be afforded the opportunity to retake the tests once prior to graduation. Each student's highest achieved state test performance index on the end-of-instruction tests shall be recorded on the student's high school transcript.
- *Other Assessments* The ACT was taken by about 70 % of Oklahoma's class of 1998. As a benchmark, the State Department of Education regards the ACT as one of the best measures of the cumulative results of K-12 schooling in Oklahoma.
- *Transitional or Final Assessment System* Implementing final assessment system

3. *Who designed and produced the assessment(s) used by the state?*

- *State Department of Education*
- *Commercial Testing Organization*
- *State teachers and administrators*
- *Assessment Committee*
- *Other*

If a commercial test was used by the state, were modifications or additions made to the assessment to address state requirements or standards? If so, what did they include?

The core curriculum was developed by a committee of several individuals, led by the state department of education: teachers, community leaders, business leaders, curriculum specialists, and superintendents.

The assessments are developed during a year long process of building items to update the test; items are then evaluated by a committee for content validity.

4. *What are the state requirements for local assessment, including the types of assessments and their use in areas such as reporting and accountability, as well as Title I adequate yearly progress? What grade levels and subjects are tested?*

The Reading Sufficiency Act requires that all school districts identify students in need of remediation in grades K-3, and to do so through multiple on-going assessment. The district identifies the number of students who need assistance and the state provides funds to do so. The districts must continuously monitor these students to determine whether they need to have an individual reading plan.

5. *Is the state assessment system aligned with the state standards? Are there plans for alignment, and if so, how will the assessment and standards become aligned?*

- *Refining standards*

- *Revamping assessments*
- *Adding components to assessments*
What is the timeline for completion of the alignment?

The state core curriculum, as mandated by law, has been in place for seven years and is currently undergoing its third review and update. As the standards evolve, so do the assessments that measure them.

6. *What is the state's approach for ensuring alignment and what evidence of that alignment is provided?*

State curriculum directors analyze test items to ensure that test items are aligned with PASS competencies.

7. *How is the data included in the state assessment system used?*

- *Student Grade Promotion/Retention, Graduation, Diploma Certification*
 - Oklahoma has a novel way of using state assessment data: In accordance with the Reading Proficiency Act, students must score satisfactory or above on the eighth-grade reading test in order to receive their drivers' licenses (state officials report very good attendance for this assessment).
 - When the high school end-of-instruction tests are fully implemented, the results will appear on students' transcripts.
 - In law, but not yet funded: when Oklahoma reaches the regional average for per pupil expenditure, Oklahoma will enact a policy that requires third-grade students (or higher) who do poorly on state assessments to attend summer school before being promoted to the next grade.
- *Teacher, School and/or District accountability* Previously, by law, the results of norm-referenced tests were used to determine low-performing and high-challenge schools. Legislation now dictates the use of multiple criteria: the academic performance index. This legislation was passed in 1999 to measure schools. Additional legislation is currently being considered.
- *Program Evaluation (Identify federal, state programs)* State assessment data is used for this purpose.
- *Identification of students for programs like Title I, state CompEd, Bilingual, etc.* The state intends to use state assessment data for this purpose, but end-of-instruction assessments are still being implemented so data is limited.
- *Instructional guidance to local administrators and/or teachers* The state accreditation guidelines state: A variety of assessments shall be used to evaluate the performance of each student in order to improve instruction. The results of the school's student assessment program shall be used to modify curriculum and instructional methodology.
- *School improvement (e.g., preparing a school improvement plan)* State assessment data is used for this purpose as well.

8. *Are there changes planned for the state assessment system (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what*

is the timeline? Are there implications for the state reporting or accountability systems (Title I or in general)?

Several changes are anticipated for the state assessment system, as mentioned above. Oklahoma is still in the process of implementing all high school end-of-instruction assessments; when these are in place, the state will be able to expand use of assessment data. Moreover, some assessments, such as the third-grade criterion-referenced assessment, have been legislated, but yet not funded.

9. What have been the major issues and challenges in the area of state assessment? Explain.

The continuous changes in the assessment system pose certain challenges, simply in the time and effort it takes to modify of the system. Officials acknowledge that the changes are positive and reflect their desire to hold students to higher standards.

Note: Progress on the various test-score indicators continues despite Oklahoma's near-the-bottom ranking in funding per student and teacher salaries, and near-the-top rankings in divorce, incarceration, and teen pregnancy. Complicating matters in the classroom, the Office of Accountability reported one juvenile offender for every 49.5 students in the 1996-97 school year. Finally, nearly one quarter of Oklahoma children live in poverty and a similar percentage of adults have not completed high school.

Inclusion Policies for Assessment

1. What exclusions are made in the current state assessment for students with disabilities? LEP? Who makes the decision about exclusion of a particular child? Does the state collect data or in other ways monitor the number and types of students excluded? Does that vary by test?

Beginning July 1, 1998, children with disabilities must participate in state and districtwide assessments with appropriate accommodations and modifications in administration where necessary. Those children who are not able to participate in the regular assessment, even with accommodations and modifications in administration will participate in an alternate assessment beginning no later than July 1 2000. Students with Low English Proficiency are exempt from the assessments for the first three years that they are enrolled Oklahoma schools.

LEAs shall include children with disabilities in all districtwide assessments with appropriate accommodations and modifications in administration, where necessary, in accordance with the requirements under IDEA. LEAs are responsible for the same requirements at the local level as the SDE is at the state level.

Documentation of the decision regarding participation in the regular assessment or in an alternate assessment, modifications in administration and accommodations and the reasons for the decision must be documented on the IEP.

2. What accommodations and/or modifications are made on the current state assessment for students with disabilities? LEP?

The following accommodations are approved for use by the Oklahoma SDE on the writing assessment:

Setting:

- Testing administration: individually, to small group, in testing carrel, in separate location, in any other location that will minimize student distractions.
- Provide special lighting
- Provide adaptive or special furniture

Timing/Scheduling

- Time of day when student is most responsive
- Administer test over several sessions as long as the total time is not changed.

Presentation

- Large Print or Braille
- Use of assistive devices/supports such as magnifier or auditory amplification devices
- Overlays
- Prompts on tape
- Increase spacing between items or reduce items per page or line
- Highlight key phrases in directions
- Teacher helps student understand prompt
- Sign directions to students
- Read directions to students
- Provide cues (arrows, stop signs) on answer form
- Reread directions for each page on questions
- Use templates to reduce amount of visible print
- Secure paper to work area with tape or magnets
- Masks or markers to maintain place
- Use of highlighter by student

Response

- Give oral or signed responses for transcription
- Utilize assistive technology communication devices
- Utilize typewriter, word processor, or computer without the use of “help” features, such as spell check, etc.
- Increase spacing
- Dark, heavy, or raised lines
- Pencil grip
- Use wider lines and/or wider margins
- Scribe copies verbatim from student’s draft
- Student tapes response for verbatim transcription at a later time
- Dictate words to scribe
- Braille

- Slant board or wedge for positioning
- Tape recorder
- Colored paper

Other accommodations permitted for the multiple choice assessment include:

- Read or sign questions to student, if test is not a reading test.
- Audio-taped administration of sections
- Extend sessions over several days
- Extend the time allotted to complete the test
- Allow frequent breaks during testing

3. Does the state provide assessments in languages other than English? If so, describe. In what grades and subjects?

No, Oklahoma does not offer assessments in languages other than English.

4. Does the state provide alternative assessments for students with disabilities? If so, describe. For which students and in which subjects and at what ages?

Oklahoma is in the process of developing an alternative assessment.

5. Does the state have a goal for the inclusion of students with disabilities and/or LEP students on the statewide tests? Does the state use any strategies to encourage the inclusion of students with disabilities? LEP students?

Yes, Oklahoma has the goal of inclusion of students with disabilities on state assessments. LEP students are exempt for the first three years of enrollment in Oklahoma schools.

6. Are changes planned in the for the inclusion of SWD and LEP students in the state assessment system (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline? Are there implications for the state reporting or accountability systems (Title I or in general)?

No changes are anticipated at this time.

Note: Oklahoma has the largest American Indian population of any state. According to the 1990 Census, 13 percent of the nation's total Native American population resides in Oklahoma, from 39 recognized tribes. Many students who are Asian, Hispanic or Native American live in homes where a language other than English is spoken.

Performance Standards

1. How many and what performance levels has the state established for its assessments?

Oklahoma has the following performance levels: Advanced, Satisfactory, Limited Knowledge, and Unsatisfactory.

Oklahoma provides verbal definitions of performance levels for each subject, as these provide more substantial information than cut scores for parents. The following example are the descriptors for mathematics, grade 5:

Advanced: A student demonstrating advanced knowledge in Mathematics will be able to order decimals, fraction and mixed numbers with common or like denominators; use and apply common percents (25%, 50%, 75%); convert mixed numbers (fractions, decimals, percents); compute using the four basic operations with whole numbers and decimals; use and apply whole numbers and decimals for the four basic operations in multi-step problems reflecting practical, everyday situations; describe data with emphasis on range (spread) and mean (average); convert measurements within the same system; and apply measurements concepts and rounding techniques to application problems involving length, weight, time, temperature, angles, area, and volume.

Satisfactory: A student demonstrating satisfactory knowledge in Mathematics will be able to use and apply whole numbers for the four basic operations in multi-step problems reflecting practical, everyday situations; determine when estimation is appropriate; use estimation in practical situations; analyze and transfer data in graphs, charts, and tables to solve multi-step problems; and identify, compare, and analyze relationships among angles (up to 180 degrees) and shapes (up to 8 sides).

Limited Knowledge: A student demonstrating limited knowledge in Mathematics will be able to identify even and odd numbers, multiples; read and write standard notation to three-digits; convert fractions and decimals to tenths; compare and order numbers using the mathematical symbols $<$, $>$, $=$; use and apply whole numbers for the four basic operation in one-step problems reflecting practical, everyday situations; identify and extend patterns; read and organize data in simple graphs, charts, and tables to solve one-step problems; identify compare and classify geometric figures using appropriate mathematical vocabulary (triangle, circle, square, rectangle); and measure attributes using appropriate tools (time, temperature, length, width, and weight).

Unsatisfactory: This student has not demonstrated satisfactory skills on the Mathematics criterion-referenced test. Students in this range should be given comprehensive mathematics instruction.

2. *Has the state set acceptable levels or targets for schools, districts or the state on tests, drop-out rates or other measures?*

- *Target level*
- *Percentage of students expected to attain target level*
- *Time period in which to attain level*
- *Annual increase required*

In the past, schools that were in the lower quartile in the state on norm-referenced tests and below the 50th percentile nationally were identified as “low-performing”. However, this is changing to an identification based on criterion-referenced test scores. The criterion-based

definition which has been introduced to the legislature is as follows: a “low performing” school is one in which 30% or more of students score unsatisfactorily in reading and math.

3. How are these performance standards calculated? What data are included in the calculations, and at what proportions (e.g. assessment results 60%, dropout and attendance rates 40%). How are the calculations made? What is the final unit of analysis for reporting school and district achievement levels (e.g. performance index, grade, category)?

Performance levels are based only on assessment data at this time.

4. Are all students, schools and districts included in these performance calculations? If not, who is excluded?

All students are included in performance calculations.

5. Are changes planned for the state performance standards (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline? Are there implications for the state reporting or accountability systems (Title I or in general)?

Performance levels were moved this year. Hence no changes are anticipated in the near future.

6. What proportion of schools and/or districts fail to meet acceptable levels on performance targets?

Three schools have been identified as “high challenge” schools

Reporting Performance Data

1. Describe the characteristics of the state performance data reporting system (by whom, what data, who is the audience) for each of the following levels:

With the exception of student reports, which are produced by the testing company, performance data reports are produced by the Oklahoma Office of Accountability, an independent oversight agency which is separate from the Department of Education.

- *Student reports* The testing company sends a report to parents which includes student performance levels and an explanation of those performance levels.
- *School reports* The Oklahoma Office of Accountability produces school report cards. School report cards are accessible on the state education website and include the following information: 70% Performance Benchmarks for Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests in math, science, reading, writing, history/constitution/government, geography, Oklahoma history; socio-economic data; parental involvement and community support; juvenile offenders and offenses; classroom and administration characteristics; high school curriculum (units offered in selected subject areas); OCCT results by subject and percent satisfactory in school and

state, and percent tested in school and state. Additional High School Performance Measures include:

- Dropout Rate
 - Graduates
 - Average GPA of HS Seniors
 - Advanced Placement Participation Rate
 - AP Tests Scoring College Credit
 - Vo-Tech Occupationally-Specific Program Participation Rate
 - Vo-Tech Occupationally-Specific Program Completion Rate
 - ACT Participation Rate
 - Average ACT Score
 - HS Graduates Completing Regents' College-Bound Curriculum
 - Out-of-State College-Going Rate
 - Oklahoma College Freshman taking at least one remedial course in Math, English, Science and Reading
 - Oklahoma College Freshmen with GPA of 2.0 or Above
 - Oklahoma College Completion Rate
- *District reports* The Office of Accountability includes the following district report information on the state education website: socio-economic data; parental involvement and community support (1-5 ranking); juvenile offenders and offenses; highest education level for adults age 20+; grade organization, area and enrollment; student programs (percent enrolled in G/T, special education, free/reduced lunch, AP); classroom teachers and professional support; school and district administration; district revenue and expenditures; average HS curriculum (units offered in selected subject areas); test results as follows:
 - Grade 3: ITBS scores by subject (reading, language, social studies, sources of info, math, science, composite), percentile, district average, community average, state average, percent tested as state and district levels
 - Grade 5: OCCT by subject (math, science, reading, writing, hist/const./govt, geography); percentile; district, community and state averages; percent tested at state and district level
 - Grade 7: ITBS, reporting same as grade 3.
 - Grade 8: OCCT reporting same as grade 5.
 - Grade 11: OCCT reporting same as grade 5.

- *State reports*

The Office of Accountability's state report on the state education website includes the following information: enrollment statistics (disaggregated), staffing data, nutrition information, fiscal data, national ranking on technology and financial indicators.

The Oklahoma Test Results Packet (on the web) includes: ACT results for state, region, and nationally; SAT results, AP results and progress since 1996; ITBS percentile results at grades 3 and 7; NAEP state and national results; OCCT results by subject, grade, percentile scoring satisfactory, demographics.

Finally, the printed report (Profiles) includes the following information: community characteristics, enrollment by ethnic group, level of education of adults in Oklahoma, percent of

population with less than a high school diploma (socio-economic adversity maps), enrollment data, percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, staff data, feedback to school questionnaires, financial data, ITBS scores by subject area, grade, and percentile rank; OCCT results by subject, grade, and percent; NAEP results by subject, grade; schools with 70% or more of students scoring “satisfactory” on the OCCT by number of subject areas; dropout rates; high school graduation rates; ACT scores for state and nation; SAT results; AP results; additional high school performance measures; college-going rate; percent of students taking remediation courses in college; college attendance by county.

Appendices to the report are as follows: juvenile arrest data by offense type, socioeconomic indicators, AP participation by State, breakdown of expenditure amounts in eight areas, NAEP reading results by state, ACT average composite scores by state, SAT averages by state, indicators displayed in maps.

- *Title I reports* The state produces Title I reports as required by federal guidelines.

2. *How are the data distributed? When during the year (month or time period after assessment)? To whom (students, teachers, parents, the media, the community)?*

The data listed above is available on the state website, in addition, a printed state report is available upon request.

An individualized copy of the Office of Accountability’s “School Report Card” is sent to each school in the state. The principal is then responsible for getting copies of the document home to the parents of each student at the school. In an effort to quantify the number of schools across the state carrying out this task, the Office of Accountability included a question in a survey asking schools if they had sent the information home to the parents. Of the schools that responded, 92.2% reported that they had distributed the Office of Accountability’s School Report Cards to the parents of their students.

3. *At what level(s) are data disaggregated (state, district and school levels)? For what groups are disaggregated data reported (see Internet sites for state, district and school level report cards)?*

- *Gender*
- *Race*
- *LEP status*
- *Migrant Status*
- *SWD*
- *SES*

Oklahoma disaggregates criterion-referenced assessments by ethnicity, gender, migrant status, and students with disabilities. In the past, disaggregated data has only been included in Title I reports. The 1999-2000 academic year will be the first year that Oklahoma publicly reports disaggregated data for the criterion-referenced exams at the district level.

4. *Does trend data exist from the state assessments (example: Texas State Assessment data is available from “1996-97 on”)?*

ACT trend data available from 1989 on; AP results since 1996

5. How are the results of students with disabilities and limited English proficiency reported? Are they included in the aggregate scores reported to the public, or disaggregated by group?

Oklahoma has the following requirements for the reporting of assessment data for students with disabilities:

Reports are made to the public regarding the assessment of children with disabilities and are available to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as reports on the assessment of nondisabled children. As of July 1, 1998, these reports include the number of children participating in regular assessment and the performance results. Beginning July 1, 2000, reports will include the number of children participating in alternate assessments and the performance results of these children. This information is only reported if doing so would be statistically sound and would not result in the disclosure of results identifiable to individual children.

Reports will include aggregated data that include the performance of children with disabilities together with all other children, and disaggregated data on only the performance of children with disabilities.

6. What are the state's requirements for the use of data in school and district improvement planning?

The state accreditation documents require schools to use assessment data in the planning process.

7. Are changes planned for performance reporting (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline? Are there implications for the accountability system (Title I or in general)?

No changes are planned at this time.

8. What have been the major issues and challenges in the area of performance standards and reporting? Explain.

Each time Oklahoma revises their academic standards and aligned assessments (which has the effect of making them more challenging) this poses problems for public interpretation of test results. Each time the standards are revised, test scores go down, and it is difficult to communicate the fact that student achievement has in fact improved. In addition, Oklahoma has a number of very small schools which poses problems for the disaggregation of data and the public reporting of this data.

State Accountability System (1999-2000 school year)

1. Provide a brief overview and history of the accountability system as the context.

The current accountability system in Oklahoma is based on the public reporting of education data, the accreditation of all schools, and the identification of “low-performing” and “high challenge” schools. Descriptions of the identification of “low-performing” and “high challenge” schools are included in the section entitled “Identifying and Assisting Low Performing Schools and Districts.”

Moreover, the state is in the process of moving towards an accountability system based on an Academic Performance Index.

2. *What are the characteristics of the state accountability system?*

Probe on:

- *Who is held accountable (students, schools, districts)?*
- *For what are they held accountable (adequate yearly progress, student achievement, processes, multiple non-cognitive indicators, etc)?*
- *Using what criteria (state assessments, local assessments, both state and local criteria)?*
- *To what targets or performance levels?*
- *With what consequences (promotion or graduation, program improvement, additional planning, state takeover, rewards, assistance, etc.)?*

Organize the response into the following subsections:

- *Student Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions*

The primary form of student accountability is through the eighth-grade reading assessment: students must score satisfactorily on this assessment in order to receive their driver’s license.

- *School Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions*

School accountability in Oklahoma is conducted through the state accreditation system. It is through this process that schools set priorities and academic goals for themselves.

Schools are visited by regional accreditation officers, who ensure that schools are meeting the accreditation requirements. If a school is not meeting a given requirement it will be issued a “deficiency.” If a school is low-performing, it already has a “deficiency,” which is reflected in their accreditation. A school may be placed on probation based on their “deficiencies.”

The state may take action against a school if it is not functioning properly, for example, due to financial mismanagement. In such as case (there was one in 1999-2000) the state may send in administrators from the department of education to address the specific issue or they may take additional action such as annexing the school.

Accreditation in Oklahoma is based on four main accreditation standards, plus additional standards for high schools and vocational schools:

Standard I: Philosophy (and/or mission) and goals.

Statement of the Standard: Oklahoma schools have the responsibility of meeting the educational needs of all students, providing equitable educational opportunities, and fostering lifelong learning as they prepare to participate in a democratic society. In order to establish priorities, aid in decision-making, and provide an effective basis for a comprehensive and continuous evaluation, each school site shall develop and maintain a written statement of the philosophy and

goals to be served by educational program that are based on the belief that all students can learn. The school's philosophy and goals must reflect consensus among the school site, the community, the local board, and the school staff. The educational programs shall address the academic, personal/social, and career/vocational development of students as they prepare for the future.

Standard II: School-Community Relations:

Statement of the Standard: The school establishes relationship with its parents and community that result in a feeling of mutual trust. These relationships are based on open, two-way communications. Parents and the community are involved in developing and monitoring the school's expected outcomes. The school displays a willingness to respond to the parents and the community, and the community supports the school and its program.

Standard III: Administration and Organization:

Statement of the Standard: The school is organized to ensure the achievement of its goals. The working relationships among the local board, superintendent, principal and staff are such as to facilitate the successful functioning of all phases of the school's program. The principal of the school has the autonomy and authority to provide the leadership needed to accomplish the goals of the school. The school is provided with sufficient professional and service personnel to ensure effective operation of all phases of the school's program. The school is organized in a manner that encourages new and innovative ideas designed to improve the program and to help the school adapt to changing conditions.

Standard IV: Curriculum, Assessment and Climate:

Statement of the Standard: The curriculum translates the school's statement of philosophy (and/or mission) and goals into learning objectives and activities. The core curriculum shall be designed to teach competencies for which students shall be tested. The curriculum shall be designed to prepare all students for employment and/or postsecondary education. The school shall use varied measures to determine the extent to which individual students are achieving the goals and levels of competencies. The instructional program is designed to impart the knowledge and skills essential to function successfully in a democratic society. Instruction is based on the selection and implementation of activities which enable each student to achieve the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Curricular activities are learning activities within the instructional process that occur in an accredited course during the school day to assist students in achieving the Priority Academic Student Skills. The co-curricular activities are an integral part of instructional program which foster the Priority Academic Student Skills that are consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the various disciplines. To accomplish these stated goals and objectives selected activities may be offered off campus as an extension of classroom instruction. Extracurricular activities enhance the educational process but are not essential to the achievement of the Priority Academic Student Skills.

- *District Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions*

District accountability is linked to the school accountability and accreditation system. Districts are responsible for overseeing the accreditation of the schools, hence they are ultimately accountable for the school's accreditation status.

3. What methods of measuring progress are used in the state accountability system?

- *Relative growth*
- *Absolute target*
- *Narrowing the Gap between high and low achievers*
- *Other*

With regard to the identification of schools as “low-performing” there is an absolute target: “low performing” schools are in those in the lower quartile in the state and below the 50th percentile nationally. (However, this definition is changing: please refer to the section on “Identifying and Assisting Low-Performing Schools.”)

4. Are all students included in calculating the measures of progress? If not, who is excluded?

In the past, the state has only looked at regular education students when identifying schools as low-performing.

5. How do the general state accountability system and the system of accountability for Title I schools compare? Are they the same, or different? How?

The state general accountability system and the Title I accountability systems are not the same: while the state system is based on accreditation and the identification of “low-performing” and “high challenge” schools, the Title I system is based on the Title I definition of adequate yearly progress.

6. Are subgroup performance results used as an indicator in the calculation of state accountability measures? If so, how? To identify schools or districts in need of improvement? For recognition and rewards?

Subgroup performance results are not used as an indicators in the state accountability system.

7. Are charter and/or non-public schools included in the accountability system? If so, how?

Oklahoma has few charter schools. However, they are required to participate in the accountability system and in the state assessment system.

8. Are changes planned for the state accountability system (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline?

The state board of education is looking at what types of intervention to take with “high challenge” schools; this may include closing the school.

In addition, Oklahoma is developing an Academic Performance Index to strengthen its accountability system:

From HB 1759: The State Board of Education shall develop an Academic Performance Index (API) to be used to measure performance of schools, including the academic performance of students. The index shall consist of a variety of indicators including, but not limited to:

- 1) Attendance rates for students and school personnel,
- 2) Dropout rates,
- 3) Results of the Oklahoma School Testing Program,
- 4) Advanced Placement participation;
- 5) Graduation rates for secondary school students,
- 6) Scores of the ACT,
- 7) College remediation rates.

The data collected for the API shall be disaggregated by socioeconomic status and ethnic group. Oklahoma School Testing Program results shall constitute no less than sixty percent of the value of the index. Based on the API, the State Board of Education shall adopt expected annual percentage growth targets for the state level, school districts, and all school sites based on their API baseline score as measured in July after implementation of this section. The minimum percentage growth target shall be five percent (5%) annually. However, the State Board of Education may set differential growth targets based on grade level of instruction.

The department of education submitted a plan for the Academic Performance Index to the state legislature but has not yet received any funding.

9. What have been the major issues and challenges in the area of accountability? Explain.

Officials in Oklahoma are concerned with how to include high-mobility students in the accountability system: they have chosen to include all students but are aware that high-mobility students can dramatically affect test scores, and that other states have chosen not to include these students.

In addition, Oklahoma has a number of very small schools which poses problems for the disaggregation of data and the public reporting of this data. Oklahoma does still identify low-performing schools even if they are very small, although they recognize problems inherent in making decisions about a small number of students.

Identifying and Assisting Low Performing Schools and Districts

1. How are schools and districts identified as low performing? Using what criteria? Do the identification processes and/or criteria differ for Title I and non-Title I schools?

Schools in Oklahoma may be identified as either “low-performing” or “high challenge” based on norm-referenced test scores: “low performing” schools were in those in the lower quartile in the state and below the 50th percentile nationally. However, this is changing to an identification based on criterion-referenced test scores. The criterion-based definition which has been introduced to the legislature is as follows: a “low performing” school is one in which 30% or more of students are scoring unsatisfactorily in reading and math. In the future this definition

will be based on end-of-instruction tests for high schools; however, these are only in the pilot testing phase.

A school becomes “high challenge” if they are “low performing” for three years.

2. Does the district or the state decide whether a school is low performing? If the district is involved in the process, how much discretion do they have?

The State Department of Education shall identify targeted schools and notify school superintendents of this status by August 15 of each year. Results of this process will be presented to the State Board of Education.

3. What types of assistance are provided to these schools and districts by the state?

- *Evaluation and Planning* yes, see below
- *Financial* yes, see below
- *Expert Assistance* yes, see below

In communicating with administrators of “low-performing” schools, the Department encourages the accomplishment of the required tasks and provides on-site assistance as requested by school administrators. The Department recommends that required tasks be accomplished through efforts of a committee composed of administrators, teachers, school board members, and selected members of the community utilizing a collaborative group process approach.

Schools identified as “high challenge” will receive on-site visits. Upon receipt of the Oklahoma School Testing Program results, an on-site evaluation visit will be conducted to determine the progress made by local school personnel. Each evaluation team shall be individualized and may include staff from the Student Assessment, Research and Planning, Accreditation, Curriculum, or other sections based upon need at each site. During this evaluation, such items as academic achievement progress and success levels attained along locally-determined indicators will be examined. Results of this visit will yield recommendations as to the disposition of each school for the coming year, based on the following guidelines:

- (1) The first such on-site evaluation will accomplish the establishment of recommendations and timelines to allow for further specification of the school’s Plan for School Improvement and additional progress to be achieved by the local faculty.
- (2) During the second annual on-site evaluation, more stringent recommendations will be made if the Evaluation Team determines that insufficient progress has taken place.

Administrators of schools identified as “low-performing” or “high challenge” will be required to attend a meeting in September. The purpose of this meeting is threefold:

- (1) To provide information regarding the local development and implementation of school improvement plans;
- (2) To assist local efforts to document school improvement and to meet the mandates issued by the State Board of Education
- (3) To inform local administrators of the evaluation process to be used.

The Department of Education monitors the progress of sites which have been identified as “low-performing” for the second consecutive year, or those identified as “high challenge.” On-site visits to all such schools will be conducted to determine the following in regard to each school’s Plan for School Improvement:

- (1) The degree to which such plans are being implemented
- (2) The needs for additional resources
- (3) The progress being made by schools

Finally, “low performing” and “high challenge” schools are eligible for CSRD grants.

4. Who provides the state assistance?

- *School/district support teams*
- *Regional centers Regional Service Centers*
- *Distinguished educators*
- *SDE staff*
- *Other – Explain*

The state operates several types of school support teams: the Title I school support teams and those that are composed of school personnel. In addition there are school improvement teams that are from the assessment office; these look specifically at test results, how to interpret these and how to raise scores.

Through Title I, Oklahoma has identified Distinguished Schools that may act as models for low-performing schools. Teachers or administrators from the Distinguished Schools may act on school support teams.

State curriculum specialists will visit low-performing schools to analyze their curriculum and take steps to ensure that they are aligned with the PASS curriculum. Occasionally, schools are not teaching the skills necessary for students to perform well on state assessments.

Finally, the state operates Regional Education Service Centers.

5. Does support to Title I and all low performing schools and districts differ? Is support generally provided for all schools and districts, or are services specifically designed to help those that are low performing?

The support system described above is designed for all low-performing schools, regardless of Title I status.

6. Has the state established a set of criteria and/or a process for getting schools and districts out of low performing status? If so, what do they include?

School performance is evaluated annually. If a school's assessment score no longer falls within the "low performing" range, then the school may be removed from the "low performing" or "high challenge" list.

7. Once a school or district is identified as low performing, what types of plans must it prepare? Who are they submitted to once completed? How do they differ from other planning documents?

Schools identified as low-performing must do the following:

- Review the Comprehensive Local Education Plan.
- Update or develop a site-specific Comprehensive Local Education Plan.
- Analyze and interpret all past scores that can be appropriately compared to determine actual achievement progress of students. Identify areas of strength in student performance and areas in which immediate and long range action needs to be taken to improve instructional programs.
- Establish in writing the Local School/Community Committee's mission, goals, objectives, and the specific strategies and tasks needed to accomplish school improvement in all areas.
- Identify the human, financial, and/or other resources currently available and needed for future accomplishment of the stated goals and objectives and to implement the necessary strategies.

Personnel in each site identified as "low-performing" for the second consecutive year, or in sites identified as "high challenge" will be required to submit to the Department a written plan for improvement by November 1 and a written progress report by April 15. The progress report shall describe the action taken to achieve school improvement and shall document any results which indicate progress toward meeting improvement goals and objectives.

8. Are changes planned for the state system of identifying and assisting low performing schools or districts (proposed or enacted and to be implemented)? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline?

The state plans to move to criterion-referenced tests as a basis for determining low-performing schools, as described in question #1, above.

Title I and Adequate Yearly Progress

1. What criteria are included in the definition of adequate yearly progress for schools and districts under Title I?

- *What measures are used (relationship between cognitive/non-cognitive data)?*
- *What targets have been established?*
- *Are local assessment systems included as criteria? If so, does the state provide guidance? Monitor their use?*
- *Is subgroup performance included in the criteria?*

Criterion-referenced assessments are used in determining if a school or district has made adequate yearly progress. Local assessments may be used in the K-3 building sites, in accordance with the Reading Sufficiency Act.

2. *What are the definitions of adequate yearly progress for the following:*

- *Title I schools and non-Title I schools*
- *Targeted vs. schoolwide programs, charter, non-public and small schools*
- *Districts*

Are these transitional or final definitions? If transitional, when will the final definitions be in place and what criteria and processes will they include?

Oklahoma Title I looks for a 5% gain in the number of students scoring satisfactorily on state assessments, particularly in those schools that have less than 50% of their students scoring satisfactorily. The same definition applies for all Title I schools, be they targeted assistance or schoolwide programs.

3. *What is the process for identifying those schools and districts that are not making adequate yearly progress under Title I? Does the district or the state make this determination for schools? If the districts plays a role, does the state provide guidance on local criteria?*

The state makes the determination that a school is not making adequate yearly progress. Oklahoma does not have a formal process beyond identifying schools and districts whose scores are inadequate.

4. *What are the criteria and processes for identifying schools and districts in need of improvement under Title I? What plans must be prepared? How can a school or district get out of Program Improvement? Does the district or the state make this determination for schools?*

If a school meets one of the following criteria, it is placed on the low-performing list.

- Greater than 50% of students in a school score at the unsatisfactory level in either reading or math,
- Greater than 50% are not reading at grade level in grades K-3

If a school does not meet this threshold for two years in a row it is placed in Title I school improvement. *However*, if a school makes the required 5% gain in students scoring at the satisfactory level, it is considered as having made adequate yearly progress and will not be placed on the low performing or school improvement list.

If one school within a district is identified as in need of improvement, then the district is also identified as in need of improvement. If a school makes adequate yearly progress for two years, then it and the district are no longer in program improvement.

5. *What types of assistance are provided to those in need of improvement under Title I?*

- *Evaluation and Planning*
- *Financial*
- *Expert Assistance*

Oklahoma offers a range of types of assistance that are available for Title I and non-Title I schools that are in need of improvement. Most schools that are in school improvement are also

those that have been identified as either “low-performing” or “high challenge” hence there is significant overlap. If a school were only in Title I school improvement, but was not “low-performing” they would be assigned a school support team.

6. *Who provides the assistance?*

- *School/district support teams*
- *Regional centers*
- *Distinguished educators*
- *SDE staff*
- *Other – Explain*

As there is substantial overlap with the Title I and non-Title I systems of support, please refer to the above section.

In addition, through Title I, Oklahoma operates a video conferencing network through which state officials can meet with personnel in schools that are identified as in need of improvement.

7. *Have waivers played a role in this process?*

Waivers have not played a significant role.

8. *Are there future plans for the state system for schools or districts receiving Title I funding (proposed or enacted and to be implemented) or for the definition of adequate yearly progress? If so, what do these plans include? Why are these changes being made and what is the timeline?*

Oklahoma officials hope to receive funding for a third-grade criterion-referenced assessment (this has been legislated, but not funded) which could then be used for Title I purposes. In addition, Oklahoma is in the process of developing a system of four performance levels, rather than two, which had been the case in the past. These have not been fully implemented for all subjects, but officials believe they will provide a more thorough picture of adequate yearly progress.

9. *Is there alignment between Title I and non-Title I systems for adequate yearly progress?*

These systems are not entirely aligned: the Title I system has been using criterion-referenced assessments as the basis for adequate yearly progress for some time, while the non-Title I system will be moving towards this in the future, and with a slightly different definition.

10. *What have been the major issues and challenges in the area of Title I? Explain.*

The students who are not making adequate yearly progress present a constant challenge for those involved in Title I.

Moreover, some schools have not planned as well as they should have; the state is trying to remedy this through training.

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