

**Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE)  
Assessment and Accountability in the Fifty States: 1999-2000**

**WASHINGTON**

*This profile was verified by the Staff of the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in June of 2000. All information is 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 state tests include the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED).

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

- *Name of Assessment Instrument(s) or Program(s)*

- *Grade Levels and Subjects Tested*

- 2nd grade Accuracy and Fluency Assessment

Measures oral reading accuracy and fluency skills. The Supt. of Public Instruction “shall identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures that can be used to measure 2<sup>nd</sup> grade oral reading accuracy and fluency skills.” Given in the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

- 3rd grade reading and math (*ITBS*)

Measures basic skills in reading and math.

- 4th grade math, reading, writing, communication (**WASL**)

Measures application of knowledge to problem solving tasks. Also used to evaluate school and district performance improvements.

- 5th grade science (**WASL**)

Measures application of knowledge to problem solving tasks. Also used to evaluate school and district performance improvements (note: This assessment will be available in the spring of 2002).

- 6th grade reading, language arts, math (*ITBS*)

Measures basic skills in reading, language arts, and math.

- 7th grade math, reading, writing, communication (**WASL**)

Measures application of knowledge to problem solving tasks. The math test is used to evaluate school and district performance improvements.

- 8th grade science (**WASL**)

Measures application of knowledge to problem solving tasks. Also used to evaluate school and district performance improvements over time.

- 9th grade reading, language arts, math, reasoning skills, and interest inventory (*ITED*)

Measures basic skills to assist in the planning and selection of appropriate high school courses. The assessment also includes information about student interests and plans for high school and beyond.

- 10th grade reading, writing, communication, math, science (**WASL**)

Successful completion of this assessment will be phased in as a statewide graduation requirement over the next eight years.

- *Norm or Criterion Referenced*

WASL is criterion referenced while the Iowa tests (ITBS and ITED) are norm referenced.

- *Matrix or Census Testing*: All students are tested.

- *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.*

WASL: In addition to multiple choice questions, the WASL requires students to answer short-answer questions, draw graphs, compare and contrast information from multiple texts, write short essays and respond to two writing prompts

ITBS/ITED: multiple choice

- *Time of Testing (specific month(s) or testing window)*

ITBS Grades 3 and 6:

March 6 through March 31

WASL Grades 4, 7, 8 and 10 and ITED Grade 9:

April 24 through May 12

- *High School Exit Exam (date of implementation and/or phase-in timeline)*

The 10th grade reading, writing, communication, math, science (**WASL**) will be used as the high school exit exam in 2006 for the class of 2008.

- *Other assessments*: None

- *Transitional or final assessment system:* Final; although there will be changes to the WASL (*see changes*), the WASL will remain as the state assessment system.

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

Six committees of educational practitioners (teachers and administrators) wrote the item specifications used the state standards as the basis for design. Committees were assigned for each language arts and math, and one for each grades tested on the WASL per subject. Riverside Publishing created the specific test questions, and these questions were periodically brought before the committees for review. The questions were also reviewed by the Fairness Committee that focused on whether or not questions were inappropriate for specific groups (i.e. certain ethnic and racial students, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, etc.).

2. *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?*

Most school districts also select and administer exams beyond those provided by the state. The state also provides teachers with classroom-based assessments for use throughout the school year at every grade level. These assessments can be tailored to the needs to the students and enable teachers to measure student progress over time in a greater number of ways than is feasible with large scale tests.

3. *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? Probe on:*
  - *Refining standards*
  - *Revamping assessments*
  - *Adding components to assessments**What is the timeline for completion of the alignment?*

The state test (WASL) is designed to measure student achievement on the state standards (Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) in reading, writing, math and other core subjects.

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

As stated previously, review committees for language arts and math at each tested grade level developed test items and specifications that were linked to the specific essential academic learning requirements. Item reviews for alignment were conducted by the state, as well as an external statistical analysis of the correlation between the standards and the assessment questions; the analysis was conducted by a professor at the University of Washington.

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

The WASL results are used for reporting and accountability (*see reporting and accountability sections*). The ITBS and ITED are in place due to state law requiring the administration of norm-referenced testing in the state at specific grade levels.

6. *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)?*

Over the coming years (by 2008), the WASL will also be implemented in civics, history, geography, economics, arts and health and fitness. By the spring of 2001, all fourth, seventh, and tenth graders will take the WASL in reading, writing, listening and mathematics. Fifth, eighth and tenth graders will also take the science test.

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

No specific issues were addressed.

## **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?*

All students are to be included in the state assessments. Nothing is to trigger an automatic exclusion from testing, and exclusions should not occur as a function of a disability category, time spent in or out of the classroom, or a student's primary language.

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

Many accommodations are available specifically for students in special populations. Accommodations are not necessary nor appropriate for most students - accommodations are only appropriate for those students who, because of a significant individual circumstance or disability, require some change in the testing environment or process to be able to demonstrate what they actually know and can do on state-level assessments. Determining when and how to provide an accommodation will depend on professional judgment and responsiveness to the particular needs of the individual student. No accommodation should be used for the first time on a state-level assessment.

- For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP team should determine and document how the student is to be assessed and the nature of appropriate assessment accommodations.

- For Section 504 qualified students, the Section 504 planning team should determine the appropriate accommodations necessary for the student's participation in this state-level assessment.
- For ESL/bilingual and migrant students, a team of educators familiar with the student's special needs (e.g., child study team or teacher assistance team) would be the appropriate decision-making group.
- It is also important to remember that some students have complex circumstances and multiple needs that require extra consideration (e.g., a student who is deaf and highly capable or an ESL student with visual impairment). The multiple needs of these students should be accommodated as well.
- For all students, it is important to involve parents in any decision-making process regarding state-level assessments. The decision-making team should review accommodation decisions at each assessment cycle to determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary.

The following list includes allowable and appropriate accommodations for special populations on the Washington state-level assessment:

#### General Assessment Administration Procedures and Accommodations

##### **All Students:**

These general assessment procedures are appropriate for all students including students in special populations.

##### **SCHEDULING – TIMING**

- The administration of the assessment may be spread over the three week testing window.
- Provide more testing time, frequent breaks and adjust materials to attention span.
- Allow students to continue working on each subtest as long as they are productively engaged. Time for individual students will vary considerably on a performance assessment.
- Administer the assessment at a time of day most beneficial to the student(s).

##### **SETTING:**

- Allow students to use study carrels or other private space.
- Use preferential seating (e.g., near the test administrator to see or hear directions better).
- Assess student individually or in a small group to reduce distractions.
- Assess student in a familiar school environment that maximizes his/her performance.
- Provide special lighting, furniture, or acoustics.
- Allow low level of calming music or nature sounds to drown out distractions.
- Allow freedom for student to move or stand as needed.

##### **AIDS OR ASSISTANCE:**

These general assessment procedures are appropriate for all students including students in special populations.

- Use student's first (primary) language or signing to give assessment directions **ONLY**.

- Reread directions or quietly repeat for individuals
- Clarify language on directions only; have student reread directions.
- Assist the student in tracking the assessment items by pointing or placing the student's finger on the items. Allow assessment administrator or other familiar adult to sit beside student.
- Encourage students to sustain effort and remain on task.
- Provide physical assistance in turning pages, handling materials, etc.
- Secure papers and materials to work area with tape or magnets.
- Provide pencils adapted in size or grip.
- Provide English or native language dictionaries -- except on reading test.

**FORMAT:**

- Student responses must be written in test booklet, added pages will not be scored.
- Student should use the space available. If student cannot write within available space their work must be transcribed VERBATIM into the booklet.

**Special Populations:**

Accommodations used for Special Populations must be familiar to the student and must not be used for the first time on the state assessment.

**SCHEDULING – TIMING:**

All of the above apply.

**SETTING:**

- Provide architecturally accessible testing sites.
- Assess student in a hospital or institution; home-bound students in their home (with appropriate test security procedures).

Accommodations not identified above must be approved by the Office of Assessment and Accountability at OSPI prior to use on the assessment.

**AIDS OR ASSISTANCE:**

Accommodations used for Special Populations must be familiar to the student and must not be used for the first time on the state assessment. If the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan documents a disability that affects reading or written communication, allow student to:

- Answer orally, point, or sign an answer. A scribe records student's response VERBATIM (e.g., from written dictation or audio tape) without interpretation, translation or corrections.
- Use appropriate physical supports or assists (e.g., easel, magnifier, arm or stabilizer guide, text-talk converter, communication device to indicate responses, noise buffers, FM or other sound amplification device to assist in hearing directions, slantboard or wedge).
- Use a reader to read math assessment items verbatim in English.
- Use a computer or word processor for recording responses (no spell check) when a computer is indicated for written communication.
- Isolate portions of the assessment page to focus student's attention (mask).

- Use math manipulatives (except calculators) as indicated. Use calculators only as specifically permitted in test directions.

If an ESL student falls within a "Limited English Speaker Range" (based on a state approved language proficiency test), allow student to use a reader to read math assessment items verbatim in English.

**FORMAT:**

- Allow Braille or large-type editions of the assessment, with appropriate test security measures for all students who use large print.

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

No, the Legislature has determined that the WASL is to be an English-only assessment and the assessment is not to be translated in any other languages.

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?*

During 1999-2000 the state field tested an alternative assessment program for students with severe disabilities. Portfolios would be used to determine the level of student work. The feedback from this pilot year is being reviewed currently, and the state is hoping to implement the program for 2000-2001.

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?*

The state expects that all students will be assessed except those with severe disabilities, so the goal is that almost 100% of students are tested. Exemptions are monitored by district.

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)?*

Again, the state is hoping to officially implement the portfolio system as an alternative assessment in 2000-2001.

## **Performance Standards**

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

There are four performance levels for reading and mathematics:

- Level 4: above standard – this represents superior performance above that required for meeting the standard
- Level 3: meets standard – this represents solid performance; student reaching this level has demonstrated proficiency over challenging content, including subject matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real world situations, and analytical skills appropriate for the content and grade level  
(Score of 400 on the reading and math assessments has been assigned as “meets the standard” on a scale from 150-600)
- Level 2: below standard – this denotes partial accomplishment of the knowledge and skills that are fundamental to meet the standard
- Level 1: below standard – this denotes little or no demonstration of the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for meeting the standard.

For listening and writing, there are only two levels: “meets standard” or “does not meet standard.”

2. *Has the state set acceptable levels or targets for schools, districts or the state on tests, drop-out rates or other measures (e.g. 70% of students in Maryland pass the MSPAP)?*

In 1998, the state created legislation establishing a mandatory 4th grade reading goal. Set by districts and schools in December of 1998 and using WASL results from the spring of 1997 or 1998, the goals are to be met by the end of the 2000-01 school year. Goals may not be less than the total percentage of students who did not meet the baseline multiplied by twenty-five percent. The goal in reading set by the state is that there be at least a 25% reduction in the percentage of students not meeting the reading standards.

School boards are also required to establish three 4th and 7th grade mathematics goals by December 15, 2001. The goals are to be determined based on the school/district's baseline and may not be less than the total percentage of students who did not meet the baseline multiplied by twenty-five percent. Goals are to be met by the end of the 2003-04 school year. Again, the goal set by the state is that there be at least a 25% reduction in the percentage of students not meeting the math standards.

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)?*

For example, if the district had 40% meeting the goal and 60% not meeting the goal:

1. 60% would be multiplied by 25% = 15%
2. 15% would be added to 40% = 55% as the goal.

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

All students are to be included in the state assessments and therefore in performance calculations. Nothing is to trigger an automatic exclusion from testing, and exclusions should not occur as a function of a disability category, time spent in or out of the classroom, or a student's primary language.

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)?*

The state is in the process of developing a Learning Performance Index to include multiple indicators (see *Reporting Performance Data* section for specifics).

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

For 1999, *students* in the state scored as listed below on the WASL:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Percent Meeting the Standards</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Math	37.3
	Reading	59.1
	Writing	32.6
	Listening	71.7
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Math	24.2
	Reading	40.8
	Writing	37.0
	Listening	86.9
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	Math	33.0
	Reading	51.4
	Writing	41.1
	Listening	72.6

## **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:*

### ***Student reports***

Parents and teachers receive scores for individual students each fall. Scores show student performance relative to a high and fixed standard of achievement and provide information on strengths and weaknesses within each subject, such as problem solving in mathematics or grammar, punctuation and spelling in writing. Results provide teachers information about where students need help in these areas and can help refine instructional strategies in the classroom. Scores are also compiled to show performance trends at the school building,

district and state levels and provide important information regarding performance on the state assessment given in grades 4, 7 and 10.

### ***School reports***

According to Senate Bill 5418 (1999), each school must publish annually a school performance report and deliver the report to each parent with children enrolled in the school and make the report available to the community served by the school. As data from the assessments becomes available, the annual performance report should enable parents, educators, and school board members to determine whether students in the district's schools are attaining mastery of the student learning goals under RCW 28A.150.210, and other important facts about the schools' performance in assisting students to learn. The annual report must make comparisons to a school's performance in preceding years and include school level goals, student performance relative to the goals and the percentage of students performing at each level of the assessment, a comparison of student performance at each level of the assessment to the previous year's performance, and information regarding school-level plans to achieve the goals.

The annual performance report must include, but not be limited to:

- (a) A brief statement of the mission of the school and the school district;
- (b) enrollment statistics including student demographics;
- (c) expenditures per pupil for the school year;
- (d) a summary of student scores on all mandated tests;
- (e) a concise annual budget report;
- (f) student attendance, graduation, and dropout rates;
- (g) information regarding the use and condition of the school building or buildings;
- (h) a brief description of the learning improvement plans for the school; and
- (i) an invitation to all parents and citizens to participate in school activities.

### ***District reports***

Senate Bill 5418 (1999) requires that each school district board of directors annually report to parents and to the community in a public meeting and annually report in writing the following information:

1. District-wide and school-level performance improvement goals;
2. Student performance relative to the goals; and
3. District-wide and school-level plans to achieve the goals, including curriculum and instruction, parental or guardian involvement, and resources available to parents and guardians to help students meet the state standards.

School districts in which ten or fewer students in the district or in a school in the district are eligible to be assessed in a grade level are not required to report numerical improvement goals and performance relative to the goals, but are required to report to parents and the community their plans to improve student achievement.

### ***State reports***

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Reporting of Assessment Results:

Legislation specifies how OSPI is to report assessment scores and additional information that must be provided, including: poverty levels, ESL students, drop-out rates, special education students, and mobility. By September 10, 1998, and by September 10th each year thereafter, the superintendent of public instruction must report to schools, school districts, and the legislature on the results of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and state-mandated norm-referenced standardized tests. The reports include the assessment results by school and school district, and include changes over time. For the Washington Assessment of Student Learning, results are reported as follows:

- (a) The percentage of students meeting the standards;
- (b) The percentage of students performing at each level of the assessment; and
- (c) A learning improvement index that shows changes in student performance within the different levels of student learning reported on the Washington assessment of student learning. The specifics of the learning improvement index have not yet been established and so it is not used in the reporting structure at this time but will be once the indicators are established.

The reports contain:

- data regarding the different characteristics of schools, such as poverty levels, percent of English as a second language students, dropout rates, attendance, percent of students in special education, and student mobility so that districts and schools can learn from the improvement efforts of other schools and districts with similar characteristics.
- student scores on mandated tests by comparable Washington schools of similar characteristics.
- information on public school choice options available to students, including vocational education.

To protect the privacy of students, the results of schools and districts that test fewer than ten students in a grade level shall not be reported. In addition, in order to ensure that results are reported accurately, the superintendent of public instruction maintains the confidentiality of state-wide data files until the superintendent determines that the data are complete and accurate. The superintendent of public instruction monitors the percentage and number of special education and limited English-proficient students exempted from taking the assessments by schools and school districts to ensure the exemptions are in compliance with exemption 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)?*

Parents and teachers receive scores for individual students each fall. Scores show student performance relative to a high and fixed standard of achievement and provide information on strengths and weaknesses within each subject, such as problem solving in mathematics or grammar, punctuation and spelling in writing. The districts are to report annually in a news release to the local media the district's progress toward meeting the district-wide and school-level goals and include the school-level goals, student performance relative to the goals, and a summary of school-level plans to achieve the goals in each school's annual school

performance report. The OSPI report is also made available to the public on the state Internet site.

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)?*

Legislation specifies how OSPI is to report assessment scores and additional information that must be provided, including poverty levels, ESL students, drop-out rates, special education students, and mobility.

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

WASL results on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade assessment have been available since 1997, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade test since 1998, and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade just for 1999.

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?*

The state has not been reporting these groups separately, but they are included in the aggregated scores if they are not exempted for participation in the assessments.

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

Although data is commonly used, it is not required in state legislation as part of the school improvement 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)?*

Changes are anticipated in the way that special education and LEP student scores are reported. The state is also still determining the indicators to be used in the learning improvement index, but most other aspects of Senate Bill 5418 have been implemented for 1999-2000 and no other substantial changes were reported.

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

When the decision was made to establish the state goal at a 25% reduction in low performance, there was little data upon which to base that decision, and although some schools have already reached that goal, it remains to be seen as to whether or not that level of achievement can be sustained.

## State Accountability System (1999-2000 school year)

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

The **Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission** is to provide the development and oversight of the state's K-12 educational accountability system. Its first meeting was conducted in the summer of 1999. The Commission was created to:

- adopt and revise performance improvement goals in reading, writing, science, and mathematics, as the commission deems appropriate
- identify the scores students must achieve in order to meet the standards on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning;
- adopt criteria to identify successful schools/districts;
- adopt criteria to identify schools/districts in need of assistance and those in which significant numbers of students persistently fail to meet state standards;
- identify schools/districts in which state intervention measures will be needed and a range of appropriate intervention strategies. This is to happen after the Legislature authorizes a set of intervention strategies and June 30, 2001.
- identify performance incentive systems;
- annually review the assessment reporting system; and
- by September 2000, recommend accountability policies, including state intervention strategies for schools/districts in which low-performance persists over a period of time.

The commission has also been directed to consider multiple indicators, including mobility, poverty, dropout rates, and post-high school indicators;

- additional assistance measures;
- rewards for successful schools/districts; and
- needed statutory changes.

The **Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC)** and the State Board of Education already accredited schools in the state using process and input measures (*see school accountability below*).

### 2. What are the characteristics of the state accountability system? Organize the response into the following subsections:

#### ***Student Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions***

Graduating seniors will be required to earn a Certificate of Mastery, which will serve as evidence that a student has achieved the EALRs by meeting the standards set for the Grade 10 assessments. This will begin in 2006 with the class of 2008. Science will be added as a requirement in 2008. The Commission on student learning recommended that meeting the standards in content areas not included in the EALRs be treated as “endorsements” rather than requirements.

#### ***School Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions***

Accreditation in Washington State has been and continues to be based in school accountability through the NASC system. The purposes are to:

- promote educational improvement through on-going self-evaluation and public validation of that commitment to improvement
- ensure parents and the community that the school is committed to quality educational programs and has the resources to provide them
- ensure that high school credits will transfer to any other school or college

Schools are required to complete a self-study every seven years, although accreditation is voluntary. There are two ways to be accredited in the state:

1. Through the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC):

Step One:

- Schools complete an annual report that requires the schools to report their status in 10 areas (educational program, student personnel services, school plant and equipment, library media program, records, school improvement, preparation of personnel, administration, teacher load, and student activities)
- Report is due October 15 and is scored by the Washington Advisory Committee in mid-November
- Report is made at NASC Annual Meeting in December; a few schools from each of the seven states involved with the NASC make a presentation describing their school
- Report is approved by the State Board of Education
- Dues are paid by each member school to the NASC

Step Two:

- Every six years, schools conduct a five-step self-evaluation
  1. student/community profile
  2. mission statement
  3. goals for student learning
  4. capability to meet the goals
  5. school improvement plan.
- A visiting team spends a day at the school reviewing the self-evaluation and school improvement plan and makes recommendations to the school

2. Through the State Board of Education

- Every seven years, schools conduct a self-study in seven areas (instructional program, staff, materials and resources, facilities, student activities, and school climate).
- Self-study requires involvement of staff, parents, district level administrator, and students (where appropriate)
- Visiting team validates the school's accreditation activities during a one-day visit
- Schools complete a follow-up report on their goals three years after visitation.
- *District Accountability/Rewards and Sanctions*

Apart from the system of reporting, districts are not held accountable or provided with rewards or sanctions for performance for 1999-2000. The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission is responsible for determining a system of accountability for both schools *and* districts.

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

The **relative growth** goal set by the state is that there be at least a 25% reduction in the percentage of students not meeting the reading and math standards by the date set in legislation.

4. *Are all students included in calculating the measures of progress? If not, who is excluded (probe on inclusion of SWD and LEP students)?*

All students are to be included in the state assessments and therefore in these calculations except those exempted due to their IEP or LEP status.

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 system of accreditation is still being fully developed while the Title I system is based on a definition of adequate yearly progress. They are not aligned at this time and alignment will not be determined until the accountability commission determines how students will be formally classified as high or low performing.

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 is in no way used as a specific indicator.

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

There are no charter schools in the state and the private schools are not included in the regulations and legislation of the state.

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?*

Again, the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission is in the process of developing a system of accountability outside of the existing reporting structure. The commission will be working on identifying successful schools, either solely by the 25% reduction criteria or also using other indicators. The commission has a report due on these and other questions September 5, 2000.

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

The state is in the process of determining indicators for schools, and so these decisions have been the major issue for the state.

## 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?*

The state has not yet determined a standardized definition for low performing schools. The schools receiving assistance from the programs listed below, such as the Helping Corps, were selected due to low performance on the WASL and the individual school's interest in receiving assistance. In the absence of clear definitions from the accountability commission, these criteria for inclusion in an assistance program were determined by the assistance program director.

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 has made determinations as explained above and the accountability commission is creating a standardized process.

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

### **Assistance for all Schools and Districts**

In addition to existing technical assistance responsibilities, legislation directs the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning and other OSPI staff to provide specified technical assistance to schools, including analysis of assessment data, information on comprehensive school improvement plans, and the conduct of regional summer institutes.

### **Accountability Implementation Funds**

To the extent funds are appropriated, OSPI is directed to provide funds to school districts to:

- develop and update student learning improvement plans;
- implement curriculum materials and instructional strategies;
- provide staff professional development;
- develop and implement assessment strategies and training; and
- fund other activities intended to improve student learning for all students.

### **The Helping Corps**

Specifically geared to math instruction, the Helping Corps have also been established by the state in Senate Bill 5418 to provide the following types of assistance:

- (a) Assistance to schools to use student performance data and develop improvement plans based on those data;
- (b) Consultation with schools and districts concerning their performance on the Washington assessment of student learning and other assessments;
- (c) Consultation concerning curricula that aligns with the essential academic learning requirements and the Washington assessment of student learning and that meets the needs of diverse learners;
- (d) Assistance in the identification and implementation of research-based instructional practices;

- (e) Staff training that emphasizes effective instructional strategies and classroom-based assessment;
- (f) Assistance in developing and implementing family and community involvement programs; and
- (g) Other assistance to schools and school districts intended to improve student learning.

4. *Who provides the state assistance?*

Professionals from the following jurisdictions provide assistance and training:

- colleges and universities
- school and districts
- educational service districts
- professional organizations  
(i.e. Washington Education Association, Association of School Administrators, etc.)
- OSPI
- Consultants

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?*

In addition to the state assistance programs described above, Title I Distinguished Educators are located in the Educational Service Districts around the state and provide phone consultation to schools interested in implementing schoolwide Title I programs.

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?*

Not applicable; the state has not established a standardized definition of low performing schools and does not define schools or districts as low performing.

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?*

Not applicable; the state has not established a standardized definition of low performing schools and does not define schools or districts as low performing.

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?*

Not applicable; the state has not established a standardized definition of low performing schools and does not define schools or districts as low performing.

## 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?*

The criteria used to determine progress is student achievement on the **Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL)** in four areas:

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade math
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade math.

Local school systems can submit locally determined assessments if they feel that the WASL has not properly represented student achievement in the school.

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

For a district to make adequate yearly progress:

- the percentage of students meeting the standard (Level 3) must increase, AND
- the percentage of students in Level 1 must decrease.

This is based on three years of data for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and two years of data for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

This plan is transitional for 1999-2000 and will change as a result of the accountability commission's recommendations. Title I will become aligned with the state accountability system determined by the commission.

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?*

Districts not making adequate yearly progress are identified by the state and then schools are identified by the districts using the same state guidelines.

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?*

Low performance in one or more of the four testing areas and grades listed above is sufficient to identify a **district** for program improvement. The criteria for identification follows:

- In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, there are three years of WASL data, and scores for 1997 and 1998 are averaged, then compared to 1999.
- In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, there are two years of WASL data, and 1998 scores are compared with 1999.
- In either 4<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade, a school district is identified for program improvement if the comparison yields one or both of the following:

- 1) the percentage of students meeting the standard did not increase, or
- 2) the percentage of students in Level 1 did increase.

Districts that are identified for Title I program improvement are required to identify schools within the district that are in need of program improvement. Identified buildings are required to review their Title I programs and make the required adjustments to improve student performance. Any revisions in Title I plans must be made in consultation with parents, staff and educational experts.

If a district has other information available to document the academic progress of students in reading and math and the district would like to request removal from program improvement, they may do so by supplying the additional assessment data.

School districts are no longer identified as in program improvement when they make progress toward meeting the state standards for at least two of the three years following identification for program improvement. This means that the district will no longer be identified when:

1. there is an increase in the percentage of their 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting the state standard as measured by the WASL reading and math tests for two out of the three years following identification for program improvement, or
2. they have reduced the percentage of students in Level 1 over two of the three years following the identification for program improvement.

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

Title I Distinguished Educators are located in the Educational Service Districts (ESD) around the state and provide phone consultation to schools interested in implementing schoolwide Title I programs. These are part-time staff that work with Title I schools as well as other responsibilities.

Each district that is identified for Title I program improvement is required to review its low-performing Title I schools and assist them in making the needed changes that will result in improved academic achievement in reading and/or math. These changes must be implemented in the 1999-2000 school year.

6. *Who provides the assistance?*

Available technical assistance and other resources available to districts include:

- Internal district staff
- Title I distinguished educators
- ESD curriculum personnel
- Services provided by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- OSPI Title I Staff
- Institutions of higher education
- Contracted consultants
- Learning improvement allocations

- Goals 2000 funds
- Safe and Drug Free School funds
- Eisenhower Professional Development funds
- Title VI funds
- CSRD program funds
- Summer leadership and accountability institutes.

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

The state worked under waivers for three years (1994-97). 1998 and 1999 were the first two years that the state has had adequate yearly progress and program improvement defined as a state for Title I, and the system has been amended during that period.

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?*

The system of accountability for Title I schools will change to become aligned with the recommendations made by the accountability commission.

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

No, they are not aligned. AYP has not been defined in the general state system of accountability.

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

The disaggregation of data has been an issue because the state does not disaggregate by the number of students who are receiving free and reduced lunches. The data in this area come from schools and districts but can be unreliable. Small schools, especially those with high mobility, have raised issues around determining school success after just a few days of testing, using only one indicator (WASL).

## **Contact Information**

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