

Overview of Washington's Student Assessment System

Staff Presentation to WASL Workgroup

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Overview

- What IS Washington's current assessment system?
- What does state law say about the assessment system?
- What does federal law (NCLB) say about the state's assessment system?

Current System

Definitions from ESHB 1209 (1993):

“*Assessment system*” or “*student assessment system*” means a series of assessments used to determine if students have successfully learned the essential academic learning requirements.

RCW 28A.655.010 (5)

“*Essential academic learning requirements*” means more specific academic and technical skills and knowledge, based on the student learning goals {established in RCW 28A.150.210}

RCW 28A.655.010 (3)

Current System

RCW 28A.150.210 – Basic Education Act Goal (excerpt)

(1) Read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences;

(2) Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness;

(3) Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems; and

(4) Understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

EALRs

Reading
Writing
Communication

Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Arts
Health & Fitness

Also, by December 2008:
Educational Technology
Literacy and Fluency

RCW 28A.655.075 (2007)

Current System

**Washington Assessment of
Student Learning - WASL**

Reading, Writing, Mathematics,
Science

**Washington Alternate
Assessment System -
WAAS**

(Special Education)

**Classroom Based
Assessments***

Social Studies, Civics,
Arts, Health & Fitness

CAA Options

(Alternative Assessments
for Graduation Purposes)

**2nd Grade Reading
Assessment**

**Washington Language
Proficiency Test – WLPT**
(English Language
Learners)

Current System

Washington Assessment of Student Learning

Grades	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science
3	2006		2006	
4	1998	1998	1998	
5	2006		2006	2005
6	2006		2006	
7	2001	2001	2001	
<u>8</u>	2006		2006	2004
10	2001	2001	2001	2004

Year Assessment Implemented Statewide

Current System

Design Features of Current WASL

- Measures student **performance against a standard (criterion-referenced)** rather than compared to other students (norm-referenced)
- **Multiple-choice, open-ended, and extended response items**
 - Reading: passages with questions of varying types
 - Writing: students respond to 2 “prompts” or situations
 - Math: multiple response modes, such as charts, graphs, diagrams, pictures, explanations, calculations
 - Science: scenarios where students respond to questions, analyze data and information, solve problems, plan investigations
- **Not timed.** Takes place over multiple days each Spring
 - Grades 3-8: locally scheduled over 3-week testing window
 - High School: mandatory schedule; 8 days over 3 week period

Current System

Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS)

Options for special education students, based on IEP:

- Regular **WASL** with or without accommodations
- **WASL – Basic*** - WASL at grade level, with passing criteria at Level 2 “Basic” rather than Level 3 “Proficient”
- **WAAS – Portfolio** - For students with significant cognitive disabilities, a collection of student work aligned to grade-level standards

Additional options for high school graduation (11th & 12th grade students):

- **Developmentally Appropriate WASL (WAAS-DAW)*** - WASL at a grade level that best matches student’s ability, with passing criteria at Level 3 “Proficient”
- **Locally-Determined Assessment*** – For students who have been unsuccessful at other options. Currently 3 commercially available assessments approved by OSPI.

*Not NCLB approved

Current System

CAA Options

Objective alternative assessments for students to meet high school graduation requirement to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement

- Must be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge expected on the WASL
- Must be expressly authorized by the Legislature for use as an alternative
- Students must take the WASL once before attempting an alternative

RCW 28A.655.061 & 065

- **Other Approved Tests** – PSAT*, ACT, SAT, AP exams in specified subjects
- **Collection of Evidence** – Collection of classroom work samples submitted to statewide panel for evaluation and scoring
- **WASL/Grades Comparison** – Compares a student's grades in English or math courses with the grades of students in the same courses who passed the WASL

Current System

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs)

- By 2008-09, districts must “*have in place*” in elementary, middle, and high schools “*assessments or other strategies*” to assure students have an opportunity to learn the EALRs in **social studies**, the **arts**, and **health and fitness**.
RCW 28A.230.095 (2004)
- Beginning in 2008-09, districts must require students in 4th/5th, 7th/8th, and 11th/12th grade to complete at least one CBA in **civics**, to be selected from a list approved by SPI.
RCW 28A.230.095 (2006)
- Districts must submit **implementation verification reports**

Current System

CBA Example: 5th Grade Health & Fitness

Mrs. Trimble, the head cook in your cafeteria, has created a new recipe for muffins that she wants to sell in local restaurants and snack shops. By law, all such snacks must have nutrition labels.

She wants to provide detailed nutritional information to her customers. She would like you to create an informational brochure for her muffins. In it, you will describe how these muffins may be part of a healthy diet, as well as detailing the nutrients they contain.

So that your brochure benefits Mrs. Trimble's customers, you must follow these steps:

- Read the food label from Mrs. Trimble's Muffins, including the **three** highlighted nutrient groups (A, B, and C)
- create a brochure with **four** pages
- create an information page for **each** of the three nutrient groups
- analyze **each** nutrient group (A, B, and C) for positive and negative nutritional value
- create a page on **each** group in which you **either**:
 - name **one** nutrient from that group that people should limit in their diets and explain how too much may be bad for a person's health OR
 - name **one** nutrient from that group that people often do not get enough of in their diets and explain why it is good for a person's health
- include **two** other foods that contain this nutrient on the page
- create an information page describing how these muffins fit into a balanced diet in which you:
 - use the food pyramid to find **two** foods that can be served with the muffins to make a more balanced meal
 - explain how **each** food that you have chosen benefits the human body
- create a title page for the brochure.

Mrs. Trimble's Muffins

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size: 1 muffin
Servings Per Container: 4

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	250
Calories from Fat	110
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 15g	23%
Saturated Fat 8g	40%
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	4%
Dietary Fiber 4g	12%
Sugars 11g	
Protein 9g	17%
Vitamin A 10%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 10%	Iron 20%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300g	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400g	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrates	300g	375g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g

Nutrient Group A points to Total Fat, Saturated Fat, Cholesterol, and Sodium.

Nutrient Group B points to Dietary Fiber.

Nutrient Group C points to Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Calcium, and Iron.

Current System

2nd Grade Reading Assessment

- Oral assessment of reading accuracy and fluency
- Selected by districts from SPI-developed list - 6 options
- Administered each fall to all 2nd graders
- Results and strategies for improvement discussed with parents at fall parent/teacher conference
- Students substantially below grade level are retested (cut scores set by SPI)
- No statewide collection of performance data

RCW 28A.300.310-320 (1997)

Current System

Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT)

- Districts **must annually assess** all students in the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) using an English proficiency assessment specified by SPI

RCW 28A.180.090 (2001)

- WLPT-II administered beginning in 2006
 - **Reading**
 - **Writing**
 - **Speaking**
 - **Listening**
- Students scoring at Level 4 “Transition” exit the TBIP. Cut scores set by SPI. Statewide collection of performance data.

State Law

Until 1999:

- Commission on Student Learning responsible for EALRs and assessment system

Until 2004:

- Implementation timelines for statewide assessments for **all** EALRs
- Descriptions of other characteristics of the assessment system

Since 2004:

- SPI, in consultation with SBE, shall maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide academic assessment system
 - content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science
 - elementary, middle, and high school years
 - designed to determine if each student has mastered the EALRs

RCW 28A.655.070

Since 2006:

- SBE sets performance standard and cut scores

RCW 28A.305.130

State Law

- System may include a **variety of assessment methods**, including criterion-referenced and performance-based measures.
- Assessments must **not be biased** toward persons with different learning styles, racial or ethnic backgrounds, or on the basis of gender.
- SPI must consider methods to address the unique needs of **special education** students and **highly capable** students in developing the assessments.
- Districts **must administer** the assessments using SPI guidelines.
- SPI must, on request, provide opportunities for the Legislative Education Committees to **review any modifications** before they are adopted.

RCW 28A.655.070

State Law

- System must be designed so that results are used by educators as tools to evaluate instructional practices and initiate appropriate educational support for students who have not mastered the EALRs at the appropriate period in the student's educational development.

RCW 28A.655.070 (5)

- By September 1, 2007, results for reading and mathematics must be reported in a format that allows parents and teachers to determine the academic gain a student has acquired from one year to the next.

RCW 28A.655.070 (6)

- SPI must provide to school districts:
 - Information on classroom-based and other assessments that could provide additional achievement information for individual students.
 - A collection of diagnostic tools that educators can use to evaluate the academic status of individual students.

RCW 28A.655.070 (7)

Diagnostic Assessments

- SPI must post a **guide** to diagnostic assessments on website
- Beginning September 1, 2007, SPI must make diagnostic assessments **available** to districts
 - reading, writing, mathematics, and science
 - elementary, middle, and high school
- Subject to funding, must provide **funding to districts to administer** diagnostic assessments
- To greatest extent possible, **assessments must be:**
 - Aligned to GLEs
 - Individualized to student's performance level
 - Provide results immediately or within 2 weeks
 - Capable of measuring student growth over time and comparing progress to other students across the country
 - Readily available to parents
 - Cost-effective

State Law

- Requirements for reporting WASL results RCW 28A.655.090
- District reports to community on performance RCW 28A.655.100
- School performance report cards RCW 28A.655.110
- Districts notify parents of students' performance RCW 28A.230.195
- Classroom-based assessments RCW 28A.230.095
- CAA alternative assessment options RCW 28A.655.061, 065
- 2nd grade reading assessment RCW 28A.300.310-320
- English proficiency assessment RCW 28A.180.090
- Education technology assessments RCW 28A.655.075

Federal Law

P.L. 107-110 “The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”

and subsequent U.S. DOE rules and guidance emanating therefrom

- **WHAT** must be assessed
- **NATURE** of the assessments
- **WHO** must be assessed
- **WHAT** must be reported

Federal Law

What must be assessed

- **Reading and Mathematics**
 - Annually
 - Each of grades 3 – 8 and High School (Since 2005-06)
- **Science**
 - Annually
 - One elementary, middle, and high school grade (Since 2007-08)
- **Participate in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**
 - Reading and mathematics
 - Every two years
 - District sample 4th and 8th grade
- **English language proficiency**
 - Annually
 - All limited English proficient students
 - Reading, writing, speaking, listening

Nature of the assessments

Mandatory assessment system **design features**:

- Same system for all students
- Provide coherent information about student attainment of state standards
- Valid and accessible for all students, including special education and ELL
- Aligned with state academic and achievement standards
- Express results in terms of achievement of state standards
- Valid, reliable, of adequate technical quality for its purposes
- Consistent with nationally-recognized professional and technical standards
- Enable reliable aggregation and disaggregation of results
- Include measures to assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding of challenging content

Subject to U.S. DOE **peer review** process

- States submit evidence to demonstrate compliance with each feature

Federal Law

Who must be assessed

- **All students in the state at the appropriate grade level**
 - 95% participation rate to meet accountability standard (AYP)
- **All special education students**
 - Students with most significant cognitive disabilities can take **alternate assessment based on different standards**. Capped at 1% of all students at grade level for AYP.
 - Some other students can take **alternate assessment based on modified standards**. Capped at 2% of all students at grade level for AYP.
- **Almost all ELL students**
 - All must take **Mathematics and Science**.
 - Students attending U.S. schools for <1 year may be exempted from Reading.
 - Students attending U.S. schools for <3 years can take Reading in another language.
 - Mathematics and Science can be **translated**.
 - Other **accommodations** (dictionaries, glossaries, oral administration) possible as long as results are still valid.

What must be reported

- **Aggregated results**
 - Statewide, by district, by school
- **Disaggregated results**
 - Gender
 - Major racial and ethnic groups
 - ELL students
 - Migrant students
 - Special education students
 - Economically disadvantaged (low income) students
- **Performance against a standard**
 - “Bright line” goal of all students achieving at grade level in reading and math by 2014
 - At least 3 performance levels: Below standard, Proficient, Advanced

In Closing

- Washington's student assessment system has multiple components, but statewide measurement of student achievement of the EALRs is largely done through the WASL and, to a lesser extent, the CBAs.
- With some exceptions, state laws pertaining to assessment and specifically to the WASL are general and provide a high degree of latitude regarding assessment design and implementation.
- The connection between some state laws and the overall state assessment system is not entirely clear (e.g. diagnostic assessments).
- Federal law contains more requirements than state law regarding the design and implementation of the assessment system (WASL), but the requirements are sufficiently complex that it is an open question about what latitude the state has to make significant design changes.