

MEMORANDUM

TO: County Test Coordinators

FROM: Jan Barth, Executive Director
Office of Assessment, Accountability and Research

SUBJECT: West Virginia Educational Standards Tests 2 (WESTEST 2)
Parent Letter

DATE: August 20, 2009

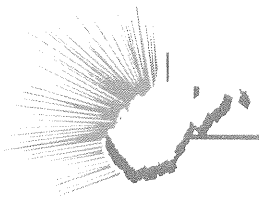
The enclosed parent letter from Dr. Paine provides notification of your child's participation in the May 2009 WESTEST 2. This letter includes an attachment of descriptions of the WESTEST 2.

The letter is to be sent home along with each child's WESTEST 2 Student Report. Please feel free to make as many copies as needed.

If you need further information, please contact the Office of Assessment, Accountability and Research at (304) 558-2546.

JB:ka

Enclosures



August 2009

Dear Parent:

In May 2009, your child took part in the West Virginia Educational Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2), a component of the West Virginia Measures of Academic Program (WV-MAP). WESTEST 2 is an assessment that measures student achievement of content and skills identified within the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives.

The WESTEST 2 Student Report is provided to give you a better understanding of your child's performance on WESTEST 2. Working with your child's teacher and school, you can use this information to build on strengths that your child possesses and work on skills where improvement is needed. Please consider visiting the website on the back of your student's report for more information about our content standards and your child's lexile and quantile scores.

The test results are not a part of the school's grading system and will not appear on your child's report card. However, the WESTEST 2 scores do become a part of each student's permanent record.

The attached *Informational Sheet* outlines descriptions of each test. **If you have questions about these results or you need further information, please contact the school or your child's teacher.**

The West Virginia Department of Education is dedicated to the academic success of each student in West Virginia. Thank you for your efforts and support in the education of your child.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Paine
State Superintendent of Schools

SP/JB:ka

Attachment

INFORMATIONAL SHEET

WESTEST 2: DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TESTS

WESTEST 2 is a test of West Virginia's Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) in the areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies for grades 3 through 11. The following tests are composed of questions that measure some of the knowledge and skills learned by students in and outside of school. They do not measure everything that is or should be taught and learned by students.

Reading/Language Arts Test

The Reading/Language Arts Test measures reading comprehension and writing strategies/skills in a multiple-choice format. Questions measure reading for literary and informational purposes, critical thinking, synthesis of data and reasoning and knowledge of the writing process and writing skills, including editing, selecting and evaluating sources. The Online Writing session of the Reading/Language Arts measures the student's ability to write a composition addressing a narrative, descriptive, informative or persuasive genre of writing. These passages and prompts emphasize 21st century skills, including real-world applications, critical thinking and problem solving. Compositions are scored electronically based on the West Virginia Writing Rubric, which includes the five analytic traits of Organization, Development, Sentence Structure, Word Choice/Grammar Usage and Mechanics. The scores of Online Writing and Reading/Language Arts are combined to determine student performance.

Social Studies Test

The Social Studies Test measures student ability to process content knowledge, apply social studies skills and demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving to reach valid conclusions in real-world situations. Students demonstrate conceptual understanding of content in the areas of citizenship, civics/government, economics, geography and history. This test is also comprised of items that emphasize ethical behavior, global awareness, financial literacy, civic participation and health and wellness.

Science Test

The Science Test uses multiple choice and gridded response items to measure conceptual understanding, scientific investigation, critical thinking and problem solving in the areas of the nature of science, content of science and application of science in grades 3-8. For the 2009 WESTEST 2 science assessment, students in grades 9, 10 and 11 were assessed on the physical science content standards of nature and application of science and content of science.

Mathematics Test

The Mathematics Test measures the content standards of numbers and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis and probability in grades 3 - 8. The ninth grade test is based on algebra I objectives and the tenth grade test is based on high school geometry objectives. The eleventh grade test is based on a combination of 40% Algebra I, 38% Geometry, 15% Algebra II and 7% Trigonometry. The eleventh grade test aligns with the ACT and college readiness standards and objectives.