

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assessment



## Monthly Communication Update

September 30, 2008

### From the State Superintendent...

All assessment is a perpetual work in progress.  
—Linda Suske, 2005

These words have never been truer than in these last few weeks as West Virginia administrators, teachers and students prepared for the *West Virginia Education Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2)* Field Test. Students then had their first glimpse at the newly developed test items aligned to the new, rigorous West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). While we will never know all of their exact thoughts, it is probably safe to say that they were struck by the rigor, depth of knowledge and higher order thinking skills required to correctly answer these test items.

It is important that the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) collect and examine the thoughts and suggestions of teachers, students and other educational stakeholders regarding the new *WESTEST 2* Field Test as the work continues in developing the operational forms of *WESTEST 2*. Many months of test development remain for CTB/McGraw-Hill, WVDE Office of Assessment and Accountability coordinators and West Virginia educators to prepare the final forms of the *WESTEST 2* for administration in spring 2009. Everyone involved in this test development process deserves to be applauded; in addition, all West Virginia teachers and students who participated in the *WESTEST 2* Field Test process also deserve to be applauded for their assistance in this grand endeavor.

West Virginia has strategically maneuvered to the forefront of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The state has managed this by its concerted effort by all educational stakeholders to comprehend, support and implement West Virginia's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning including new, rigorous world-class, 21<sup>st</sup> century CSOs, a new statewide accountability assessment in *WESTEST 2* and the world of possibilities opened by online technological tools such as TECHSTEPS, INTEL, Thinkfinity, Acuity and Writing Roadmap 2.0. The WVDE has aligned all of these elements into a cohesive, globally competitive educational system that depends on rigorous instruction presented in a manner that supports, encourages and challenges our digital native West Virginia students. During the next months, as work progresses on developing the operational *WESTEST 2*, the WVDE and all West Virginians must continue to support and encourage the collaboration and best thoughts required of the test developers and find ways to support and encourage our teachers as they grapple with the challenges of providing quality instruction that will prepare our students for not only completion of *WESTEST 2*, but also for entering the work place in a global economy in flux.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven L. Paine'.

Dr. Steven L. Paine  
State Superintendent of Schools

## Office of Assessment and Accountability Highlights

### 1. What is the PSAT Pilot (2008) for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students?

- The PSAT Pilot is an opportunity for 10<sup>th</sup> grade West Virginia public school students in the professional pathway, students who have demonstrated the interest and ability for advanced or college preparatory work, and other interested students to take the PSAT at no personal cost.
- The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) will cover the testing fees of the PSAT for 10<sup>th</sup> grade public school students.
- Schools will **not** be invoiced for the testing fees of the PSAT for 10<sup>th</sup> grade public school students.
- Schools will be invoiced for the testing fees for 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade public school students.

### 2. What are the objectives of the PSAT Pilot for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students?

- The PSAT results can be used for instructional decisions, course selections and career planning.
- The PSAT results can be used to encourage, support and motivate students who are likely to succeed in AP courses and who would likely score a 3 or better on the AP exam to enroll in AP courses and take AP exams.
- The PSAT Pilot can help to increase student preparedness and performance on the SAT.

### 3. Why has the WVDE initiated the PSAT Pilot for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students?

- Policy 2510: *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs* (effective July 2008) requires each high school to offer as electives a minimum of four AP courses or the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program annually.
- Too many students with the potential to successfully complete AP courses are not electing to take these courses.
- Research is available that indicates that students who take AP courses and exams have higher grade point averages, earn more credit hours and have higher college graduation rates than those students who do not take AP courses and exams.

### 4. What is the PSAT?

- The PSAT is a preliminary SAT and contains the same type of questions.
- It measures student performance in three areas: critical reading, writing and mathematics.
- The **Critical Reading** sections include reading comprehension questions about full-length and paragraph-length passages. They also include sentence completions.
- The **Writing** sections include multiple-choice questions on grammar, usage, word choice and organization. There is no essay section (unlike the SAT).
- The **Mathematics** sections include multiple-choice questions and grid-in responses. Topics include numbers and operations, algebra and functions, geometry and measurement, statistics, probability and data analysis.

### 5. How can the PSAT results be used?

- PSAT results can be used to identify students who are likely to be successful in AP classes and who are likely to score a 3 or better on the AP exam.
- PSAT results can be used to motivate students to take AP courses and AP exams.

### 6. When will the PSAT be administered?

- The PSAT will be administered to interested 10<sup>th</sup> grade public school students, as well as to 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders, on Wednesday, October 15, 2008, or Saturday, October 18, 2008.
- Individual schools determine the actual test date.
- Schools are encouraged to administer the PSAT on Wednesday, October 15, 2008, in order to promote equity and access.

### 7. Must all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in the PSAT Pilot for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students?

- No. Participation in the PSAT Pilot for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students is voluntary.
- There will be no consequences for students who decide not to participate in the PSAT Pilot for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## West Virginia Educational Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2)

1. **What activity is the WVDE planning in order to promote student and community awareness and excitement for the WESTEST 2?**
  - The Office of Assessment and Accountability is very excited about the WESTEST 2, the state's 21<sup>st</sup> century assessment. This assessment is designed around the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards and Objectives* and it encompasses the content, rigor and skills that West Virginia students need to effectively compete in the global arena.
  - In order to excite and motivate students who will be taking this test for the first time in May 2009, the Office of Assessment and Accountability is sponsoring a WESTEST 2 LOGO Art Contest to design a logo for the WESTEST 2 test booklets and ancillary testing materials.
2. **Who is eligible to enter the WVDE LOGO Art Contest?**
  - All public school students enrolled in grades 3 through 11 are eligible to enter this contest.
3. **What contest guidelines must be followed?**
  - All contest entries must be original student artwork.
  - Students must use the submission form provided by the WVDE.
  - Size of artwork cannot exceed 8 inches by 8 inches.
  - Artwork format should be black and white.
  - Artwork should not contain fine detail since the artwork will be reduced to fit onto standard-sized test booklets and ancillary materials.
4. **What judging criteria will be used in selecting winning artwork?**
  - Artwork will be judged for its relevance to WESTEST 2.
  - Artwork will be judged for its relevance to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
  - Additionally, all artwork will be judged for its creativity, aesthetics and technical qualities.
5. **Will winning participants receive prizes?**
  - All participants will receive a certificate.
  - One state level winner **per eligible grade level** will be selected.
  - A digital camera will be awarded to each grade level state winner.
  - One **overall** state winner will be selected
  - The overall state winner will receive a grand prize in addition to a digital camera. Also, his/her logo design will be used on all WESTEST 2 materials.
6. **To whom should LOGO Art Contest entries be submitted?**
  - All contest entries should be submitted to Pat Dillon **by November 3, 2008**.
  - **Submit to:**  
Pat Dillon  
West Virginia Department of Education  
Office of Assessment and Accountability  
Building 6, Room 717  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East  
Charleston, WV 25305
7. **To whom should any LOGO Art Contest questions or concerns be addressed?**
  - Address all questions or concerns to Pat Dillon at (304) 558-2546, FAX: (304) 558-1613 or [dillon@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:dillon@access.k12.wv.us).

## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

### 1. What is required of NAEP—selected schools?

- Please note that **NAEP contracts** test administrators; **school personnel do not administer the NAEP assessment**. School personnel may be asked to assist with providing accommodations such as signing if that is in a student's IEP.
- Since **there may not be sufficient contracted personnel to conduct all accommodation sessions simultaneously, the school may volunteer to utilize school staff so that all testing sessions can be conducted during the same testing period.**
- **The state will submit student names and demographic data to NAEP from the state WVEIS file.**
- The school will provide the required information about the school and teachers as well as **review the information about the students.**
- The school will encourage students to participate in the assessment and to give their best efforts.
- The school coordinator will meet with the field staff once or twice prior to the assessment.
- The school will provide acceptable facilities and space for the administration of the assessment.
- The school will send notification regarding the assessment to all parents.

### 2. Will training be offered to assist schools in increasing 2009 NAEP student performance?

- **WVDE will be offering professional development sessions for select teachers in NAEP sampled schools.**
- The focus of this professional development will be to teach strategies that support increased instructional rigor (relative to the new, rigorous WV CSOs), integration of technology tools and use of balanced assessments that facilitate increased student performance.
- Each 4<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP sampled school selected one teacher to attend a professional development session and then share presented information to his/her school.
- Each 8<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP sampled school selected one reading/language arts teacher and one science or mathematics teacher to attend a professional development session and then share presented information to his/her school.
- Professional development sessions will be conducted **October 7, 2008 at the Charleston Civic Center** in Charleston, WV and on **October 8, 2008 at the Waterfront Plaza Hotel** in Morgantown, WV.
- In addition, teachers are encouraged to utilize the resources available on the TEACH 21 Web site <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/>.

### 3. How does a school administer assessments for three content areas all in the same day?

- NAEP is an assessment that is administered to a representative sample of students. Ideally, each school will have 90 students participating in the NAEP assessment. Of those 90 students, 30 students will take the reading test, 30 students will take the mathematics content area test and 30 will take the science content area test.
- All assessments, except the hands-on science and the computer interactive science test, can be administered simultaneously.
- While the school will be administering NAEP tests in three content areas, each student will participate in only one content area test.

### 4. How are NAEP test booklets developed?

- Test items are developed to adequately measure the content area as described within the *NAEP Assessment Framework*.
- Questions are then divided into “doable” chunks called blocks.
- Each test booklet is composed of two sections or blocks of questions.

## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (continued)

### 5. How long will the assessment take to complete?

- *NAEP* is a timed, but not speeded, test.
- Students with IEPs may be given additional time on the assessment day to complete the assessment. Just like *WESTEST 2*, the *NAEP* assessment must be completed on the same day.
- Each student will be asked to complete the two blocks of his/her assigned *NAEP* content area test.
- Each block is designed to require approximately 25 minutes for completion.
- In total, students should require only 90 minutes to complete the entire assessment (two blocks of questions at approximately 25 minutes each and a background questionnaire).
- *NAEP* field staff will arrive at the school approximately one hour prior to the start of the assessment to finalize all preparations, and they will remain at the school for approximately one hour after the assessment in order to prepare tests for shipment.

### 6. How will *NAEP* ensure the confidentiality of WV student information?

- Individual student data are **NEVER** released.
- Principal, teacher and student names are removed from all testing materials before these materials leave the school for processing/scoring.
- All principal, teacher and student names are stored within a *NAEP* provided envelope until the end of the school year. At the end of the school year, the school is asked to destroy the envelope and its contents.
- The school *NAEP* coordinator will mail a provided postcard to *NAEP* indicating that the envelope and its contents have been properly destroyed.
- *NAEP* does **NOT** maintain permanent files of the names of students who are tested **nor** does it retain any identifiable link between student names and actual test scores.
- **Under Federal law, violation of confidentiality of *NAEP* data is illegal.**

## West Virginia Benchmark/Classroom Assessments

### 1. What progress has been made regarding rostering of information in Acuity?

- The WVDE has submitted the rostering files to CTB/McGraw-Hill so that they can create all classes and user accounts in Acuity.
- Files were pulled from WVEIS scheduling data so that teachers would not have to create their own classes or add their students prior to using Acuity.
- When West Virginia teachers log into Acuity, their classes and student rosters should be ready.
- WVDE will re-roster following the WVEIS second month report date in October to ensure that all classes are accurately loaded into Acuity.
- The re-rostering process will not affect existing classes or student data.
- Any questions or concerns regarding missing students or classes should be directed to John Miller, (304) 558-2546 or [jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us).

### 2. What is the most current information concerning Acuity servers?

- 15 servers have been strategically placed throughout the West Virginia state-wide intranet in order to speed access to and availability of Acuity.

### 3. When was the West Virginia Acuity "GO LIVE" date?

- Acuity went live in West Virginia on September 25, 2008.
- All user IDs and passwords were sent to Acuity district administrators on Friday, September 26, 2008.
- Acuity district administrators sent these IDs and passwords to each Acuity school administrator.

## ***West Virginia Benchmark/Classroom Assessments (continued)***

- Any questions or concerns related to user IDs or passwords should be directed to Acuity school administrators, Acuity district administrators, or to John Miller, (304) 558-2546, [jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us).
- 4. How can I become part of the ACUITY LISTSERV?**
- Anyone who attended an Acuity overview and who provided their email addresses on the sign-in sheet are already on the listserv.
  - Anyone who would like to be added to the listserv should complete the following steps:
    - ❖ **Send an email to [listserv@listserv.wvnet.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.wvnet.edu) with the following line in the body of the note: **Subscribe K12- Acuity- L First\_Name Last\_Name****
    - ❖ **(example: **subscribe k12- acuity- L Charlie Brown**)**
  - Remember to leave the subject blank and to remove signature information from the body of the message.
  - Any questions or concerns related to the Acuity listserv should be directed to John Miller, (304) 558-2546, [jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us).
- 5. How can I participate in Certified Acuity Trainer sessions?**
- Due to limited space and scheduling conflicts, the WVDE was not able to include a representative from every school district in the Certified Acuity Trainer sessions.
  - The WVDE Benchmark staff will continue to provide Acuity training as requested from school districts.
  - Acuity training materials are available on the Acuity Web site, Office of Assessment and Accountability, <http://wvde.state.wv.us/oaa/filecabinet.html#acuity>:

## ***ACT EXPLORE and PLAN***

- 1. What is the 2008 testing window for ACT EXPLORE and PLAN?**
- The 2008 testing window for both *ACT EXPLORE* and *PLAN* is October 27- November 7, 2008.
- 2. Who may administer ACT EXPLORE or ACT PLAN at the school?**
- The principal/building level coordinator is responsible for training the examiners.
  - An examiner must be a currently employed educator and/or approved employee of the state, county or RESA, or an educator of a non-public school who holds a valid West Virginia teaching license.
  - An examiner must have been trained and have signed an ***Examiner's/Proctor's/Scribe's Secure Materials and Test Procedures Agreement*** (WVBE Policy 2340 §3.12).
- 3. May West Virginia nonpublic schools participate in the ACT EXPLORE and/or ACT PLAN administration?**
- Yes. The nonpublic school administrator must notify the county test coordinator of the school's intent to participate at least two months prior to the testing window or by a date determined by the county test coordinator.
  - The nonpublic school students may test at their school if the school is approved by the Office of Assessment and Accountability, or they may test at a location determined by the county test coordinator.
  - To be eligible for approval, the school must have at least one staff member eligible to serve as an examiner (see WVBE Policy 2340: *Definitions* §126-14.4.3.12 and *Program Regulations* §126-14.4.11).
  - Letters of invitation to participate in the West Virginia statewide assessment program were sent to the private and parochial schools at the beginning of the school year.
  - Nonpublic students and schools shall be required to follow all testing guidelines and procedures (see WVBE Policy 2340: *Program Regulations* §126-14.4.11).

**ACT EXPLORE and PLAN (continued)**

4. **May home- instructed (home- schooled) students participate in ACT EXPLORE and/or ACT PLAN administration?**
  - Yes. Parents/guardians must notify the county test coordinator of their intent to participate at least two months prior to the testing window or by a date determined by the county test coordinator (see WVBE Policy 2340: Program Regulations §126-14.4.10).
  - Home-instructed students must test in the county in which they reside.
  - Test location(s) will be determined by the county test coordinator.
5. **May students write in their ACT EXPLORE or ACT PLAN test books?**
  - Yes. All scratch work is to be done in the EXPLORE or PLAN test booklets.
  - Each student will write his/her name on the front of the test booklet in the space provided.
  - The student's EXPLORE or PLAN test booklet will be returned to the student along with the student score report.
6. **May students use highlighters in their ACT EXPLORE or ACT PLAN test books?**
  - No. Highlighters, markers, colored pencils and pens are not to be used in the testing process.
  - Students must use number 2 pencils to mark their responses on the answer sheet.
7. **Must schools provide calculators for students to use during testing?**
  - No. Students may choose to use a personal calculator that meets ACT's criteria.
8. **What type of calculator meets ACT's criteria?**
  - Students may use any four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator unless it has a built-in computer algebra system.
  - The following types of calculators are permitted, but only after they are modified as noted:
    - ❖ Graphing calculators except those with a typewriter-style keypad (known as QWERTY) or one that includes a computer algebra system (CAS).
    - ❖ Calculators with paper tape; **the tape must be removed.**
    - ❖ Calculators that make noise; **the sound must be turned off.**
    - ❖ Calculators that can communicate wirelessly with other calculators; **the infrared data port must be completely covered with heavy opaque material such as duct tape or electrical tape.**
    - ❖ Calculators that have power cords; **all power/electrical cords must be removed.**
  - Hand-held minicomputers, personal digital assistants or laptop computers may **not** be used.
  - All types of memory, including standard memory, ROM and flash ROM, **must be cleared to factory default both before and after testing.** The principal or building level coordinator will determine how this will be done.
9. **Must students use a calculator on the ACT EXPLORE and/or ACT PLAN mathematics tests?**
  - No. Students are not required to use a calculator on the EXPLORE or PLAN mathematics test.
  - All problems can be solved without the use of a calculator.
  - If a student chooses to use a calculator, then it must be one of the types of calculators approved by ACT and modified according to ACT requirements.
10. **May students use a calculator on the ACT EXPLORE and/or ACT PLAN science tests?**
  - No. The use of a calculator is not allowed for the science tests.
11. **May the ACT EXPLORE and ACT PLAN reading tests be read to a student?**
  - Yes. Both EXPLORE and PLAN English and reading content tests may be read aloud.
  - Reading these tests aloud is an allowable accommodation for students with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency.
  - The "Read Out Loud" accommodation must be documented in the student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or LEP Assessment Participation Document.

## Available Resources

### What resources are or will be available to support 21<sup>st</sup> century assessments in the classroom?

- **Office of Assessment and Accountability**— West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress and Other Assessment Administration Schedules for 2008-2009, <http://wvde.state.wv.us/oa/calendar0809.html>.
- TEACH 21 Web site: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/>
  - Interactive Content Standards and Objectives and Learning Skills and Technology Tools
  - Instructional Guides
  - Units of Study
    - a) Algebra I
    - b) 5-8 language arts
  - Assessment examples
  - Strategy Bank
  - SAT/ACT student writing guide
- Writing Roadmap 2.0 beginning 2008-2009
  - Beginning in school year 2008-2009, the WVDE will be providing CTB/McGraw-Hill's Writing Roadmap 2.0 for all public schools in West Virginia. This purchase was made as a part of the WESTEST 2.
- Acuity
  - In school year 2008-2009, schools will have access to CTB/McGraw-Hill's Acuity platform.
  - Professional development for this system is currently being provided.
- The WVDE will continue to provide a monthly update regarding the implementation of the new 21<sup>st</sup> century assessments.

Please use the link provided in the box below to submit any questions, concerns or recommendations to the WVDE. **Questions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assessment Monthly Communication Update should be submitted by the second Friday of the month** in order to be addressed in the next month's issue.

### Questions/Answers

We encourage you to submit your questions, concerns and recommendations to Dr. Diana L. Smith at [dllsmith@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:dllsmith@access.k12.wv.us). We will address them in the **21<sup>st</sup> Century Assessment Monthly Communication Update**. It is our goal to support the changes in instruction and assessment in order to successfully implement 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and meet the needs of our children.

Questions for the **21<sup>st</sup> Century Assessment Monthly Communication Update** can be submitted at: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/questions.html>