

21st Century Assessment



Monthly Communication Update

October 31, 2008

From the State Superintendent...

For the month of October 2008, the West Virginia Board of Education has been celebrating **Parent Involvement in West Virginia Schools** by featuring artwork created by four West Virginia students emphasizing the theme of parent involvement. These four students were honored by having their artwork placed on postcards that can be downloaded from the West Virginia Department of Education Web site at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/tt/2008/postcardwinners.pdf>. In viewing these postcards, the message that these four students are sending to parents is clear—get involved and stay involved with your child's education!

Statements embedded within the artwork include: "Believe in me and my dreams," "love," "encourage," "trust," "inspire," and "Learning turns lights on at my house!" Think about all of the explicit and implicit messages that these statements make not only to parents, but also to the educational community at large. These students' words have the power to uplift and inspire all of us in our quest to educate West Virginia children.

Our students interact in a digital world where boundaries of nations and states are often blurred; in this world, instant communication and collaboration can occur seamlessly and immediately. Our students have this power at their fingertips; yet, there is still the need and desire for the familial bonds. Children need to feel connected with parents—to feel supported and encouraged to develop their skills and to increase their learning potential. Research has shown that parent involvement in the education of their children is a critical factor in improving academic achievement.

Today in West Virginia, our students are faced with the immediate and direct requirements of more rigorous Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs), a new state assessment, and the immediate and long-term effects of a global marketplace in turmoil and change. They face the urgency to develop more complex communication skills, increased critical thinking and decision making skills, and greater problem solving and diplomacy techniques. Amid all of these challenges, the one constant in an ever-changing world is the power of parents to motivate, sustain, and encourage their children to dream bigger and to work toward those dreams.

This October and all year long, the educational community—all of us—must support and encourage parent involvement in the educational pursuits of their children/our students. If we all work together, our West Virginia students will attain and maintain grade-level proficiency and achieve high academic standards befitting citizens of the 21st century.

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

40 counties have volunteered to participate in the 10th grade PSAT Pilot!

1. What is the voluntary PSAT Pilot (2008) for 10th grade students?

- The PSAT Pilot is an opportunity for 10th 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 10th grade public school students.
- Schools will **not** be invoiced for the testing fees of the PSAT for 10th grade public school students.
- Schools will be invoiced for the testing fees for 9th and 11th grade public school students.

2. What are the objectives of the PSAT Pilot for 10th 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 10th 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 types 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.

Office of Assessment and Accountability Highlights (continued)

6. **How will the WVDE provide follow-up information to school districts?**
 - A follow-up webinar is scheduled for November 3, 2008, for comments/next steps.
 - This webinar will include central office staff, AP coaches and teachers.
7. **Where can someone find additional information about the PSAT?**
 - Additional information can be found at the West Virginia Department of Education PSAT Web site <http://wvde.state.wv.us/oaa/filecabinet.html>
 - TEACH 21 Web site at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/>
 - **2008- 2009 Official Educator Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT** at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/official-educator-guide-to-the-psat-nmsqt.pdf>
 - **PSAT/NMSQT Dates & Deadlines** at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/psat/deadlines>
 - **Scores and Reports** at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/psat/scores>
 - **Sample Student Report** at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/sample-psat-nmsqt-student-score-report.pdf>
 - **Understanding 2007 PSAT/NMSQT Scores** at http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/counselors/psat/2007_Understanding_Scores_No_Answer_Key.pdf

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 21st century assessment. This assessment is designed around the *21st 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.
 - ☀ **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.
 - ☀ **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.
 - ☀ **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 21st century learning.
 - ❖ Additionally, all artwork will be judged for its creativity, aesthetics and technical qualities.

West Virginia Educational Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2) ***(continued)***

- ✿ **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.
- ✿ **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 25305-0330
- ✿ **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 pdillon@access.k12.wv.us.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

1. **How will student names be submitted for NAEP testing?**
 - Schools do not need to do anything regarding student list submission for *NAEP*.
 - A list of students from each sampled school will be prepared from the state WVEIS file and uploaded to Westat.
2. **When should parental notification concerning NAEP testing be sent home?**
 - Schools are required to inform parents about the school's participation in *NAEP* by using the letter provided via email and/or the MySchool Web site.
 - Schools may choose to notify all parents in the sampled grade or to notify only the parents of students sampled for the *NAEP* test.
 - Schools will **not** have a list of the sampled students until the pre-assessment visit.
3. **When will the pre-assessment visits be scheduled?**
 - A member of the *NAEP* field staff will contact the school in December to schedule pre-assessment visits.
 - The pre-assessment visits will occur January 5-23, 2009.
 - *NAEP* field staff will ship pre-assessment packets to schools for delivery in early January.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (continued)

4. Will students with IEPs or 504 Plans take the NAEP assessment?

- As part of the pre-assessment packet, schools will receive a questionnaire for each student with an IEP.
- In addition to the questionnaires, schools will receive additional instructions to assist with completing these forms.
- The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine what accommodations an individual student needs in order to fully participate in the test.
- While the WVDE expects as many students as possible to be included in the *NAEP* testing, the Department understands that some students cannot accurately demonstrate what they know or can do through a paper/pencil test format.
- Schools should carefully consider the allowed accommodations for each student before excluding any students from testing.
- **In general, all students taking *WESTEST 2* should take *NAEP*, and students who take *APTA* should be considered to take *NAEP* if at all possible.**

5. 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.

West Virginia Benchmark/Classroom Assessments

1. Whom should I contact with specific questions concerning Acuity?

- Any questions or concerns regarding missing student names, missing classes, questions or concerns related to user IDs or passwords, or the Acuity list serv should be directed to Acuity school administrators, Acuity district administrators, or John Miller, (304) 558-2546, jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us.

2. 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 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.

ACT EXPLORE and PLAN

1. What are the ACT College Readiness Standards?

- The ACT Standards are detailed, research-based descriptions of statements of the knowledge and skills associated with what students are likely to know and to be able to do based on their *EXPLORE* and *PLAN* test scores.
- The ACT Standards relate *EXPLORE* and *PLAN* test scores to the types of skills needed for success in high school and beyond for English, mathematics, reading and science.
- The ACT Standards communicate widely-shared learning goals and educational expectations.
- The ACT Standards serve as a direct link between what students have learned, what they are ready to learn next, and what they must learn before leaving high school in order to be prepared for work or college.
- The ACT Standards reflect the progressions and complexity of skills in the four content areas.
- See <http://act.org/standard/> for the ACT College Readiness Standards.

2. Why were the ACT College Readiness Standards developed?

- ACT developed them in response to the need for better information about student achievement.
- The ACT Standards are an effective tool for enhancing student learning based on their test scores.
- The ACT Standards answer the question, “What does a given score on *EXPLORE* or *PLAN* mean?”

3. How are the ACT College Readiness Standards organized?

- Six College Readiness Standards score ranges (13-15, 16-19, 20-23, 24-27, 28-32 and 33-36) are provided for each content area (English, mathematics, reading and science).
- The ACT Standards are cumulative; students scoring in the 20-23 score range are likely to be able to demonstrate the skills and knowledge indicated in all of the preceding score ranges (13-15 and 16-19).
- The ACT Standards are also organized by content strand (e.g., Expressions, Equations and Inequalities in mathematics).

4. How can the ACT College Readiness Standards be used?

- Students can use the ACT Standards to identify the skills and knowledge needed to be prepared for work or college.
- Students with the potential for advanced courses can be identified.
- Teachers can use the ACT Standards to design and deliver instructional programs that will prepare students for success in the workplace or in college.
- Activities from the *Ideas for Progress* can be used by students with their parents and/or teachers to improve the students’ knowledge and skills.

5. What is *Ideas for Progress*?

- *Ideas for Progress* is a series of suggested activities designed to improve students’ knowledge and skills in English, mathematics, reading and science.
Ideas for Progress have been developed for six score ranges (1-12, 13-15, 16-19, 20-23, 24-27 and 28-32).

ACT EXPLORE and PLAN (continued)

- The **Ideas for Progress** are also organized by content strand (e.g., Expressions, Equations and Inequalities in mathematics).
 - **Ideas for Progress** is part of the ACT College Readiness Standards (see <http://act.org/standard/>).
- 6. What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores?**
- The ACT College Readiness Benchmark scores are early indicators of probable readiness for college-level work or the workplace by the time the student graduates from high school.
 - The **EXPLORE** and **PLAN** Benchmark Scores represent the minimum test scores students need to achieve on these tests to be on track for success in college or the workplace.
 - Students scoring at the **EXPLORE** and/or **PLAN** Benchmark Scores have a 50% chance of meeting or exceeding the relevant ACT Benchmark Score.
 - This information can be used to inform students and parents of academic readiness for college-level course work.

ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores			
Subject Test	ACT	PLAN	EXPLORE
English	18	15	13
Mathematics	22	19	17
Reading	21	17	15
Science	24	21	20

- 7. How will students know how their **EXPLORE** and **PLAN** test results compare to the ACT Benchmark Scores?**
- The **EXPLORE** and **PLAN** student score reports have a section labeled “College Readiness” on the front of the reports.
 - The **EXPLORE** or **PLAN** Benchmark Scores are listed.
 - Students are informed whether their scores are “below”, “at” or “above” the ACT Benchmark Scores.
 - Students are encouraged to talk with their teachers or counselors about courses that could help to improve their skills.
 - Suggestions for improving their knowledge and skills are listed on the back of the student score reports.
- 8. Will **EXPLORE** and **PLAN** results be used for **NCLB** accountability for schools/counties/state?**
- No. Although **EXPLORE** and **PLAN** are components of the **West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress**, the student, school or county test results are not used within calculations for AYP measures.

Available Resources

What resources are or will be available to support 21st century assessments in the classroom?

- **Office of Assessment and Accountability**— West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress and Other Assessment Administration Schedules for 2008-2009 at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/oaa/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 *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 21st century assessments.

Please use the link provided in the box below to submit any questions, concerns or recommendations to the WVDE. **Questions** for the *21st 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. We will address them in the *21st Century Assessment Monthly Communication Update*. It is our goal to support the changes in instruction and assessment in order to successfully implement 21st century learning and meet the needs of our children.

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