

21st Century Assessment



Monthly Communication Update

November 30, 2008

From the State Superintendent...

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is working with local school districts to provide a 21st century system-wide approach to assessment in West Virginia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for all of your hard work in administering the **West Virginia Educational Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2) Online Writing Assessment Field Test** this past spring, the **WESTEST 2 Field Test** this past September, and for administering the first WVDE-developed **Benchmark I** assessment, which is available to local school districts on Acuity for grades 3-11 in reading/language arts and mathematics. The department will continue to provide a network of high-quality 21st century support tools to assist the local school districts in implementing 21st century learning.

In a world filled with global competition, economic downturns and various hurdles to their overall success, our students face an urgency to develop more complex communication skills, increased critical thinking and decision-making skills, and greater problem solving and diplomacy techniques. The underlying support for all of these increased skills and abilities is always technology. As West Virginia students, teachers and administrators move into this challenging world of 21st century thinking, learning and *doing* within our local school districts, we must support and encourage this 21st century approach to the work. Additional technology tools are needed in our schools and more innovative online approaches to completing and disseminating the work is crucial in bridging from the paper-filled world of the 20th century schoolhouse to the wireless, online world of the 21st century classroom.

The department has worked with advisory committees across the state over the past two years to gather recommendations on how to proceed with designing the new assessment program to include the distribution of assessment reports to local school districts. It was recommended that the department provide 1) **WESTEST 2** student reports in paper format for all students to the county test coordinators for immediate delivery to schools, and 2) all other reports sent via an electronic file to the local school district for immediate distribution. The WVDE has been sharing this same information with all educational stakeholders with this monthly newsletter, as well as at statewide meetings.

Within the spirit of collaboration, I request your support for electronic reporting of school reports that will provide each West Virginia school with an electronic report file, which will allow teachers to work online with the data just as they currently do with TestMate Clarity, and that assures assessment reports are distributed more quickly to our schools. The department continues to 1) remain open to your recommendations for the implementation in moving from paper to electronic assessment/reporting, and 2) seek your voices in shaping the *doing* of 21st century instruction and assessment.

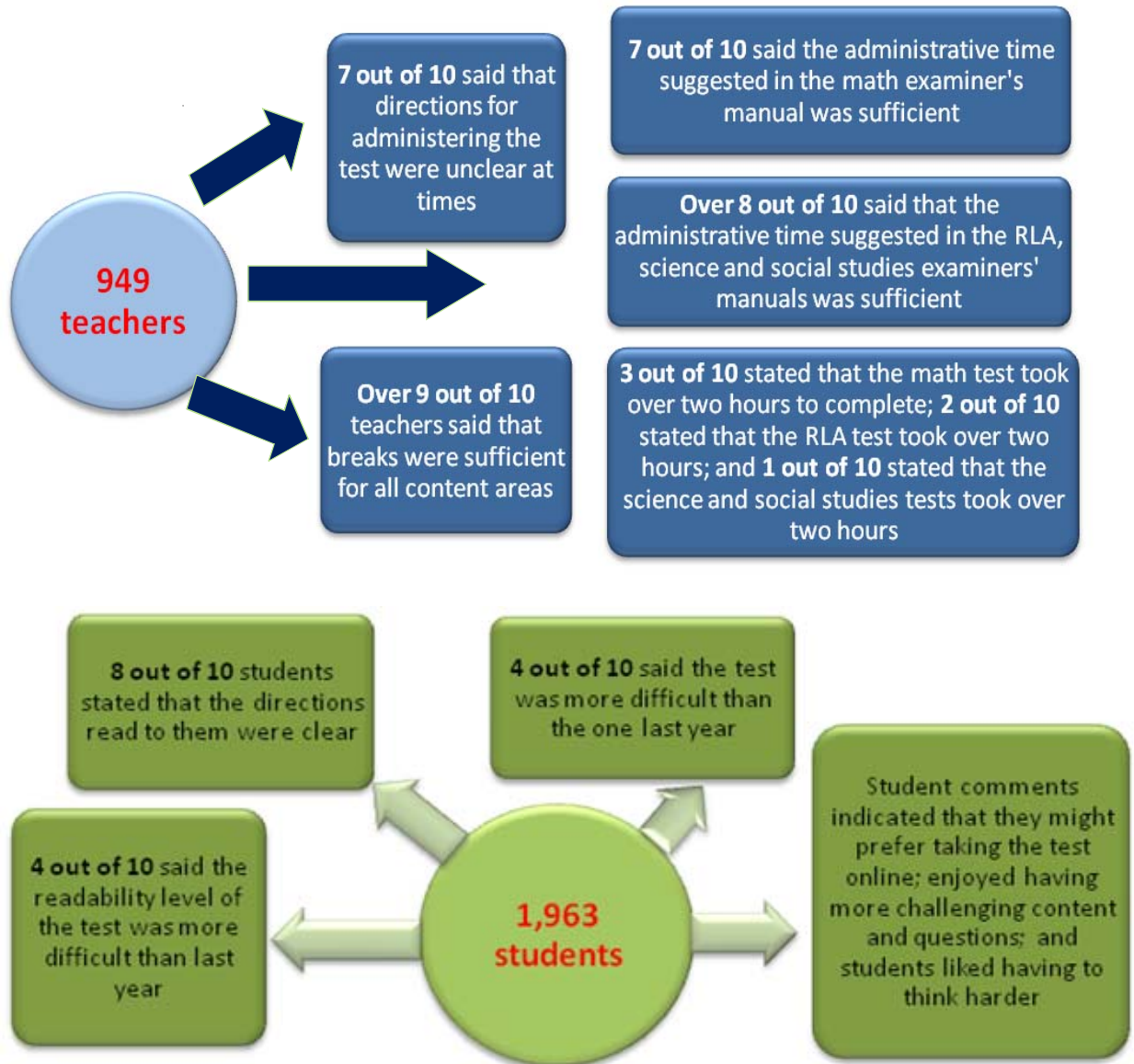
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven L. Paine'.

Dr. Steven L. Paine
State Superintendent of Schools

West Virginia Educational Standards Test 2 (WESTEST 2)

WESTEST 2 Field Test Survey Update

At the completion of the *WESTEST 2* Field Test, the WVDE provided teachers and students (approximately 120,000 students) from all 55 participating counties the opportunity to share their thoughts regarding the field test. Two surveys were developed and placed on the WVDE Web site. Survey results will be utilized to make appropriate adjustments, as applicable, to *WESTEST 2*. The following results were obtained from the online **WESTEST 2 Field Test Teacher Survey** and the **WESTEST 2 Field Test Student Survey**:



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

WESTEST 2 Logo Art Contest Update

Appreciation is extended to all counties that encouraged the 3,049 students to participate in the WESTEST 2 Logo Art Contest!

The first round of judging has begun, and winners will be determined prior to January 2009.

A state-level winner will be selected from each assessed *WESTEST 2* grade, grades 3-11, and each winner will receive a digital camera.

From these grade level winners, an **overall state winner** will be selected and this state winner will receive an HP laptop computer with padded carrying case.

All students who entered the Logo Art Contest will receive a certificate for their participation.

Awards will be presented at a West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) meeting in January or February 2009.

Any questions regarding the Logo contest should be directed to Pat Dillon at (304) 558-2546 or pdillon@access.k12.wv.us.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NAEP 2009 is just around the corner! NAEP field staff members are currently being trained, and they are making preparations to administer the assessment in West Virginia schools. WVDE has been supporting many ongoing initiatives to improve student achievement and NAEP scores.

West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) have been aligned to the 21st Century Partnership and NAEP frameworks. This alignment has resulted in the West Virginia 21st century CSOs, which have been available to teachers for more than one year. This school year the new CSOs are required and *WESTEST 2* is aligned to those CSOs.

In October 2008, each NAEP school was asked to send representative teachers to professional development sessions in either Charleston or Morgantown. All representatives were then asked to return to their schools and share their new information with other teachers. This professional development opportunity was well received by all in attendance.

During the October training, teachers were introduced to the NAEP Questions Tool, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/startsearch.asp>, and the WVDE Google Site for NAEP 2009 Schools, <http://sites.google.com/a/wvde.k12.wv.us/naep-2009> (**requires WebTop registration and sign-in**). Both of these sites provide sample questions that can be used in the classroom

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (continued)

by teachers. In addition, the TEACH 21 Web site, <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21>, was showcased. All administrators and teachers were encouraged to use these resources with their students.

WVDE developed sample NAEP question booklets at each assessed grade level for teachers, students and parents to use in determining the types of questions asked on the NAEP assessment. These test books are available on the **WVDE Google Site for NAEP 2009 Schools**, <http://sites.google.com/a/wvde.k12.wv.us/naep-2009> (**requires WebTop registration and sign-in**).

Planning is currently underway to develop one more webcast presentation before the February assessment date. All teachers who attended the October 2008 professional development sessions in Charleston or Morgantown will be asked to provide input regarding the topic of this webcast.

West Virginia Benchmark/Classroom Assessments



Benchmark I



The WVDE is pleased to announce the successful launch, on Nov. 17, 2008, of the first West Virginia benchmark assessment, *Benchmark I*, on the Acuity platform. This benchmark assessment covers grades 3-11 in both mathematics and reading/language arts. *Benchmark I* (and the other WVDE-developed benchmark assessments) is designed to provide a snapshot of student progress as it relates to the acquisition of selected 21st century CSOs. This snapshot can be utilized by teachers to guide instructional design and interventions.

Forty-two school districts are currently participating in Acuity *Benchmark I*, and several additional districts have indicated that they also will begin participating in this benchmark assessment.

A webinar was conducted in order to train school district administrators regarding the creation of test assignments and to answer their questions prior to their beginning use of the benchmark assessment. Another webinar will be scheduled prior to the launch of the second benchmark in order to train administrators on analyzing Acuity reports to redirect and inform instruction.

The response to *Benchmark I* from professionals in the field has been overwhelmingly positive! Here are a few comments from county test coordinators:

“This program is great. Not only is it so much better than iKnow, it’s the greatest thing since sliced bread!”

“The assignment process is easy and straightforward.”

“This program is extremely user friendly and intuitive.”

West Virginia Benchmark/Classroom Assessments (continued)

The Office of Assessment and Accountability will be providing West Virginia educators with two additional benchmark assessments during the current school year; the second benchmark assessment, **Benchmark II**, is scheduled for a Jan. 15, 2009, release, and the last benchmark assessment is scheduled for a mid-March release. Each of these assessments will provide educators with numerous, instant reports on their students' performance, which can be easily used to inform instruction.

In addition, Acuity provides, per grades 3-8, instructional resources which are step-by-step, online tutorials designed to help students grasp various skills needed to master the West Virginia CSOs.

For more information on the West Virginia benchmark assessments, or Acuity in general, please contact the Benchmark Assessment Team at (304) 558-2546, or by e-mail.

Sandra Foster - Lead Coordinator

slfoster@access.k12.wv.us

John Miller - Coordinator, Technology

jpmiller@access.k12.wv.us

Sonya White - Coordinator, Mathematics

snjwhite@access.k12.wv.us

Allegra Kazemzadeh - Coordinator, Reading/Language Arts

akazemzadeh@access.k12.wv.us

PSAT 10th Grade Pilot (2008) Update

We are pleased to report that **40 counties** and **138 schools** participated in the PSAT 10th Grade Pilot!

Almost twice as many 10th grade students (11,005) took the PSAT as did 11th grade students (5,835) and 695 other students took the PSAT.

A PSAT 10th Grade Pilot follow-up webinar was held on Monday, Nov. 3, 2008.

During the PSAT 10th Grade Pilot, counties and schools had questions about the return of unused test books. David Gupta, The College Board, clarified that schools may keep the unused test books for instructional purposes.

Concerns also were raised about the proximity of the PSAT and PLAN testing windows. WVDE will work with The College Board and ACT to explore possible options to this concern.

If PSAT becomes a funded option in 2009, WVDE will:

- Expand the EXPLORE and PLAN Advisory Committee into a College Readiness/Workplace Readiness Advisory Committee
- Create necessary resources

PSAT 10th Grade Pilot (2008) Update (continued)

Registration and workshop presentations of PSAT data interpretation will be conducted by The College Board and WVDE on **Jan. 7, 2009**. Letters of invitation will be sent to county superintendents from Dr. Steve Paine. Registration for this workshop will be made available by the West Virginia Center for Professional Development on its Web site, <http://wvcpd.org>. Additional meeting details will be provided by WVDE.

Additional training sessions are in planning and will be announced.

WEST VIRGINIA MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS and Other Assessment Administration Schedules for 2008-2009 WVMAP Assessments

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP): Grades 4, 8 and 12

January - March 2009 2009 is the administration year for reading, mathematics for 4th, 8th and 12th grades and science for 4th and 8th grades.

WESTEST 2 Online Writing: Grades 3-11 (Writing Scores are integrated into WESTEST 2 R/LA scores)

March 2 - 27, 2009 Grades 6 - 8 Middle School Online Testing Window
March 23 - April 10, 2009 Grades 9 - 11 High School Online Testing Window
March 30 - May 1, 2009 Grades 3 - 5 Elementary School Online Testing Window

ALTERNATE PERFORMANCE TASK ASSESSMENT (APTA): Grades 3-8 and 10 and Science Grade 4, 6 and 11

April 27 - May 8, 2009 Testing window and make-up - APTA. Grades 3-8 and 10: reading/language arts and mathematics. Grades 4, 6 and 11 complete science in addition to the reading/language arts and mathematics.

Other Assessments for 2008-2009

(note: the assessments listed below are not administered by the Office of Assessment and Accountability)

HEAP - Health Assessment: Grades 6, 8 and/or 9-12

Online Throughout School Year Ongoing based on when students complete the course.

ACT College Admissions

February 7, 2009

April 4, 2009

June 13, 2009

Testing dates on Saturdays.

SAT

January 24 - 25, 2009

March 14 - 15, 2009

May 2 - 3, 2009

June 6 - 7, 2009

Testing dates on Saturdays.

WESTELL: Grades K-12

March 23 - April 24, 2009

Measures the progress of students who are not native English speakers, or have a home language other than English.

HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK ASSESSMENT: Grade 12

January 5 - January 30, 2009

50 plus schools

Golden Horseshoe: Grade 8

April 1 - 9, 2009

West Virginia history test.

Other Assessments for 2008-2009

(note: the assessments listed below are not administered by the Office of Assessment and Accountability (continued))

WORK KEYS: Grade 12

March 2 - 13, 2009

Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, Locating Information for career/technical education concentration.

Career/Technical Education, End of Course Technical Skills Test (EOCTST): Grades 9-12

January 2 - 20, 2009

May 1 - June 2009

TECH STEPS: Grade 8

September, 2008 - April 2009

Six modules to be completed.

Advanced Placement (AP) Grades 9-12

May 5 - 8, 2009

May 11 - 15, 2009

Students enrolled in AP classes .

Happy Holidays to all West Virginia educational stakeholders from the Office of Assessment and Accountability! The *Monthly Communication Update* newsletter will not be published during December due to the holidays. A new issue will be available in January 2009.

Questions/Answers

We encourage you to submit your comments, 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>