

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

COM Study Committee
MINUTES

Meeting of January 30, 2001

Members Present: Nick Brossoit, Linda Carpenter, Barb Clausen, Lynn Fielding, Marc Frazer, Gary Gainer, Greg Hall, Don Hanson, Denny Hurtado, Tom Koenninger, Cheryl Mayo, Bob McMullen, Steve Mullin, Sue Shannon, Dennis Wallace, Andy Wheeler, Ron Woldeit

Members Unable to Attend: Carly Cyr, Terry Densley, Linda Hernandez, Gary Kipp, Rich Nafziger, Patrick Patrick, Marv Sather, Gay Selby

Staff: Larry Davis, Cathy Hardison

Guests: David Anderson, Brian Barker, Carol Taylor Cann, Ron Munkres, Chris Thompson

The meeting was called to order at 3:25pm by Gary Gainer, Chair. Marc Frazer moved adoption of the minutes of the preceding committee meeting, second by Linda Carpenter. Minutes approved.

Greg Hall, new committee member, introduced himself. He is the Director of Assessment, Research and Curriculum for the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Greg shared information about his background. He came to Washington from Alberta, Canada.

Chairman Gainer asked Mr. Hall to describe the Alberta experience with high stakes testing. The main points of the Alberta experience are included as Attachment A. Following this sharing, Mr. Hall and David Anderson, Assessment Specialist in Mr. Hall's division, walked the committee through a document titled, Validity & Reliability of the Grade 10 WASL As A Requirement for Graduation (see Attachment B). Mr. Hall also handed out **A System Model for Improved Student Learning** (see Attachment C). Highlights and questions relating to the presentation by Mr. Hall and Mr. Anderson include:

- There is lots of evidence that the process used to develop the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) was sound and followed standards recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA), American Educational Research Association (AERA), and the National Council for Measurement in Education (NCME).
- Are the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) targeted to be exit level at the tenth grade? Are the Benchmark 3 EALRs appropriate for the tenth grade?
- Range-finding is a validity issue related to scoring of the WASL.
- Need more empirical information, including post-graduation follow-up data, before a decision can be rendered.
- How long past graduation does the follow-up need to be conducted?
- Is it possible to have a valid and reliable test and a non-valid/reliable system? ANSWER: It is possible.
- Does bias review (fairness standards) include socioeconomic status?
- The cut-score (i.e., performance standard) assumes a student comes to school ready to learn and is well-taught. How is this assumption proven?
- Fears about the emerging system may be legitimate, but don't forget that the current system can hurt kids, too.

Throughout the review by Mr. Hall and Mr. Anderson, parking lot issues were identified and are included as Attachment D.

There was general discussion of timeline and finalizing the committee work plan. The committee agreed that it would look at April 2003 to submit its final report to the State Board of Education and that every six months it would evaluate the work plan and progress to date. The committee agreed that it expects to receive a critical analysis from the appropriate source regarding "danger point" issues relating to validity and reliability.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:10pm.

Attachments

ATTACHMENT A

Alberta, Canada Education Reform Experience

- Public education is provincially controlled.
- There is mandated content by grade level, by subject.
- There is a province-wide curriculum.
- The sequencing of the curriculum can be different from one district to another. The WHAT is mandated, the HOW is not mandated.
- Large-scale, province-wide assessment at grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. Produces no surprises.
- No retakes on the province-wide tests in grades, 3, 6, and 9. Retakes only for the grade 12 province-wide assessment.
- When the writing portion of the grade 3, 6, and 9 exams are scored, the building principals get the anchor papers back.
- Grade 3, 6, and 9 teachers score grade level exams for the first score result. Trained teacher scorers provide a second score result. The final score is the blended score.
- Textbooks have to align 90% with the provincial content standards.
- Alberta started province-wide standards-based assessments in 1982.
- There are 12th grade diploma exams in English, mathematics, social studies, science, and French.
- 50% of the student's final grade is determined by their performance on the exit exams. 50% of the student's final grade is determined by the teacher. The final grade is a 50/50 blend.

Alberta's Accountability System:

- System Improvement Reporting (SIR)
- Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISII)

The Minister of Education has the power to intervene in a district.

ATTACHMENT B

Validity & Reliability of the Grade 10 WASL As A Requirement for Graduation

- **SOUND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Were the WASL assessments developed using a technically sound and legally defensible process?

- **VALIDITY**

- **Construct Relevance**

Are the constructs measured by the WASL relevant for a high school graduate? Are the knowledge and skills measured by the WASL necessary for a high school graduate?

- **Opportunity to Learn**

In the absence of a mandated state curriculum, can we be reasonably sure that all students have an opportunity to learn the knowledge and skills measured by the WASL?

- **Free of Bias**

Is performance on the WASL based upon knowledge and skills rather than membership in a specific group?

- **Reasonable Performance Standards**

Is the level of performance required to meet standard reasonable to deny a diploma? Was the process of setting standards appropriate for this purpose?

- **RELIABILITY**

- **Test reliability**

Is the reliability of the WASL sufficient to meet professional standards?

- **Decision consistency**

Is the measurement error at the cutting score small enough to reduce the false negatives to a reasonable level?

- **DUE PROCESS**

- **Adequate notice**

Have students, parents, schools and the public been given enough notice to prepare for this requirement?

- **Retest opportunities**

Will students have adequate opportunities to retake portions of the assessments for which they do not meet standards?

- **Remediation opportunities**

Will districts and schools have the resources to provide meaningful remediation opportunities to students not meeting the standards on the WASL?

- **ADEQUATE EVIDENCE**

Will the evidence of technical soundness withstand the review of the courts?

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Next Steps:

- National Expert Panel Review
- Opportunity-to-Learn Study
- Collect Additional Evidence
- Recommend Appropriate Resources Necessary for Implementation

Greg Hall, David Anderson, OSPI (January 2001)

ATTACHMENT D

Parking Lot Issues

From January 30, 2001 COM Study Committee Meeting

VALIDITY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Construct Relevance

1. Consider a follow-up of graduates and non-graduates in 1 to 5 years to examine relevance of the EALRs and WASL for students.

Opportunity to Learn

2. Approved textbooks list available to provide opportunity to learn.

Reasonable Performance Standards

3. Clear grade level standards and descriptions specific to each grade and subject.
4. Single test for Certificate of Mastery and as a graduation requirement.

Free of Bias

5. Comprehensive system for screening test items for poverty bias.
6. Is the level of performance required to meet standard reasonable or appropriate process? (Is this a reasonable standard for well-taught, ready-to-learn students?) [need more information]
7. Are we testing what we want students to know? (Method of developing test items from the EALRs and the rotation of items.)
8. Are we going to always test communication only by listening? (oral presentations, etc.)

GOAL 2

1. Is WASL reasonable to use for high stakes as a part of the system? Is the WASL reasonable for students not ready to learn? Is the WASL de-motivating and increasing dropout conditions?
2. How can we create a positive climate within the learning system to support students getting to the standards?
3. Safety net, health support, etc.

GOAL 3

1. 4th and 7th WASLs useable for intervention to prepare for 10th grade?