



2016 National Summit on Education Reform (Excellence in Education)

West Virginia's A-F Accountability
Journey

December 1, 2016
Washington, DC

West Virginia Board of Education Goal

The West Virginia Board of Education will provide a statewide system of education that **ensures** all students graduate from high school prepared for success in high-quality postsecondary opportunities in college and/or careers.

Standards-Based A-F Accountability System: *A Six Year Journey (2010-2016)*

- **Standards** – *what students should know (2010; revised 2015)*
- **Assessments** – *measurement of student learning of standards:
Smarter Balanced Assessment (pilot 2014; administration 2015, 2016))*
- **Accountability** – *a system of multiple measures to define student achievement and progress toward mastery of standards (2016)*
- **Capacity Building** – *engaging each school in effective school improvement to maximize student achievement (2007, revised 2014)*

Standards vs. Curriculum

STANDARDS

CURRICULUM

What's the Difference?

Standards are what we want students to know, understand and be able to do; **Standards** represent goals.

The **Curriculum** is an intentional learning plan to ensure students achieve the goals of the standards; the **Curriculum** represents the learning experience.

Who is Responsible?

West Virginia Board of Education
West Virginia Department of Education

County boards of education,
administrators and teachers

West Virginia General Summative Assessment

Why We Chose Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)?

- Strength of the consortium
- Leverage resources
- Alignment to our WV standards
- Consistency
- Accountability system

Dispelling the myths of SBAC:

- WVGSA given once annually to students in grades 3-11
- Less than 1% of the school year is spent on the annual statewide test
- Districts schedule testing *within* a 25-day window
- Total testing time for students is no more than 4 hours in ELA and 4 hours in math

The West Virginia Accountability Journey - Why Use an A-F Accountability System?

- Governor Tomblin (2014) – State of the State Address
- Public concern: requests for simplicity in reporting student achievement and school progress
- Business community: concern for a transparent and understandable rigorous system to prepare the workforce
- Communication: review and discussions with other states (IN, OH, FL, KY, and Excellence in Education)

Involving “ALL” Constituencies

- Involved a 3-year communication, public relations effort

(If you wait until after the fact, you appear defensive.)

- Public release of grades: November 16, 2016

- Stakeholder discussions:

Governor

State Legislators (LOCEA)

Chamber of Commerce

WV School Boards Association

WV Association of School Administrators

Teacher unions

Educating the state board of education

Communicating with the media

Facing our Challenges

- A basic challenge is **perception - fear of the unknown.**
 - 1) Supporters/cheerleaders – Governor, higher education, Chamber of Commerce, parents, legal community
 - 2) Detractors – educators, some legislators
 - 3) Mixed reviews – media, educators, some legislators
 - 4) WVU Communications Dept. – media campaign

NCLB or ESSA?

Effects on West Virginia's A-F Accountability System

- NCLB – singular measurement utilizing state summative assessment, waiver requested for subgroups due to WV isolated student populations

100% summative assessment based

- ESSA – in 2015, WV began to incorporate multiple measures of accountability based on anticipated federal law.

83% summative assessment

17% multiple measures

A-F Accountability System

- School grades are based on the following measures:
 - 83% Student Performance
 - 17% Non-performance items
- Of the 83% Student Performance
 - 55% Growth
 - 45% Proficiency
- Of the 17% Non-performance items
 - Attendance
 - Graduation Rates
 - Passage of Advanced Placement, Dual Credit Courses, etc.



A-F Accountability System

- Annually, every public school earns a grade, **A, B, C, D, F**
- Descriptions of each letter grade:
 - **A** Schools with **Distinctive** student performance
 - **B** Schools with **Commendable** student performance
 - **C** Schools with **Acceptable** student performance
 - **D** Schools with **Unacceptable** student performance
 - **F** Schools with **Lowest** student performance



A-F Accountability System

- Districts receive full approval if:
 - All schools receive a **C** or above; and
 - Schools below **C** each demonstrate acceptable *“annual”* improvement



A-F Accountability System

- Cut scores established by the WVBE
 - Base year: 2015-2016 school year
 - Cut scores remain constant so schools know their targets for grade improvement
 - Cut scores raised when 65% of schools reach an A or B grade



Communicating the A-F System

WVU College of Media Studies – media design conferences, TV, radio, print, website, communication packets to schools and others



WVDE websites -

www.mywvschool.org (all things A-F)

<https://wvde.state.wv.us/zoomwv/> (all things data)

A-F Accountability System

- A-F requires consistency:
 - Standards - Not constantly changed
 - Assessments – Aligned and steady
 - Accountability - A-F implemented over years
 - Capacity Building – Dependent on the results of our system outlined above.



Capacity Building & Support

Capacity Building & Support:

- Is necessary but difficult
- Requires true resolve and grit with challenging actions to truly build an effective accountability system that will support increased student achievement
- Challenges the status quo

How Can a State Maintain Focus With Its Accountability System?

- Allow student data to tell the story
- Showcase schools and districts that
 - a) are high performing
 - b) exhibit significant progress from year to year
 - c) implement an effective capacity building and school improvement process
- Communicate, communicate, communicate

Navigating the Political Landscape

West Virginia –

Governor – democrat

Legislature – senate and house republican

National –

President – republican

Senate – republican

House of Representatives – republican

Challenge and Goal – preserve and protect public education

2015-2016 Metrics That Matter

The system is working – encouraging initial results:

- More students are graduating (*89.81%, second highest in the nation*)
- Students have shown gains in proficiency on SBAC in math and English language arts (comparative data 2015 to 2016)
- Attendance rates are increasing
- WV is 1 of 6 states meeting all 10 National Institute For Early Education Benchmarks for High-Quality Pre-K; 5th in the Nation for access to Pre-K

2015-2016 Metrics That Matter

- West Virginia ranked 33rd in the nation by Education Week's annual *Quality Counts* publication (*based on K-12 Achievement, School Finance & Chance For Success*)
- More students enroll in dual credit courses to prepare for college
- West Virginia was the only state in the country to see an increase in eighth grade reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress
- Increase in students taking AP exams and a higher percentage scoring a 3 or better

Is the A-F Accountability System Worth the Effort?

ABSOLUTELY

Why?

The growth of our nation depends upon a solid and strong public education structure. We have an intellectual, economic, and moral imperative to be honest in evaluating and improving our schools.

PARTING THOUGHTS

- 1) Be deliberate, transparent, and methodical with your design and any revisions.*
- 2) Pay attention to details of the process.*
- 3) Stay on message. Avoid unwarranted distractions.*

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