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ABSTRACT

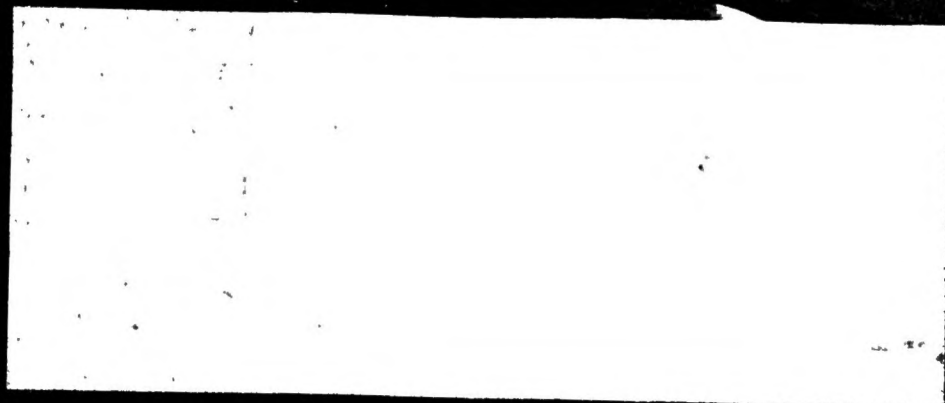
This report represents the first attempt by the Council of the Great City Schools to assess the states of minimal competency testing in its twenty-eight member cities. This report does not focus on the results of the tests, but on the general characteristics of each competency testing program. Few cities use the same tests or collaborate in program development, and there is wide variance in the grades to which the tests are administered. There is no single producer of the tests: in some cases the state develops the tests; in others, the local school system, a private testing agency, or even a combination of the three. Most tests have been developed and implemented during the last four years in conjunction with remedial instruction. The tests represent a first attempt by each school system/community at identifying the skills necessary to function in society. Program components and descriptions of competency testing in each district are included. (GK)

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MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTING IN THE GREAT  
CITY SCHOOLS

SEPTEMBER, 1979

compiled by

Maureen Connelly and Michael Casserly

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

## PREFACE

From time to time, the Council of the Great City Schools will receive a request from one of its members to survey other urban districts on issues of major concern or interest. In addition to the topic of testing and achievement being one of the most frequently asked about issues of our office, the Council's Board of Directors has identified information on minimal achievement standards as one of its basic needs. In response, staff has gathered data on the status of minimal competency testing in our member districts and has packaged the results in this report. Maureen Connelly, who worked at the Council as a Summer Intern and has returned to her studies at Yale, and Michael Casserly, the Council's Legislative and Research Specialist were responsible for initiating and conducting the survey. We felt that their findings would be of interest to all of our member school districts.

The Council would like to thank the testing directors in our districts who contributed so much to this document, Maureen and Michael for their research, and Gwendolen Ingraham for typing the various drafts of the report.

Samuel B. Husk  
Executive Director



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## MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTING IN THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

This report represents the first attempt by the Council of the Great City Schools to assess the status of minimal competency testing in its twenty-eight member cities. Since many of the districts have not fully implemented their testing plans, few conclusions can be drawn from this preliminary survey about how well the new programs are working, and it is certainly too soon to begin comparing the standards achieved by children in one district with those in another. Consequently, this report does not focus on the results of the tests, but rather on the general characteristics of each competency testing program.

Because educators have not agreed upon a standard definition for competency testing - nor for "competence" itself - we have applied the term to many different kinds of testing programs for the purposes of this report. Few cities use the same tests, except in cases where a statewide testing mandate has been issued, nor have they collaborated in developing their programs. Standardized tests administered in one city for program evaluation or instructional planning serve as the competency tests in another. The content covered by the tests range from basic literacy to applied life skills such as filling out an application reading a recipe or writing a check. The grades at which the tests are administered also vary widely. Finally there is no single producer of competency tests. In some cases the state develops the tests; in others, the local school system, in others a private testing agency; and in still others, any combination of the three.

The programs discussed in this report do have some similarities, however; most have been developed and implemented during the last four years, many of

the competency tests are being used to determine whether a student will graduate and receive a diploma, and the tests have been implemented in conjunction with remedial instruction. Finally, the tests represent each school system and the community's first attempt at identifying the skills necessary to function in society.

In order to describe each program as accurately and comprehensively as possible, both the superintendent and the testing director from each Council district were asked for information about: test titles, test producers, skills tested, grade levels tested, use of test results, program origins, special student policies, test purposes, and parental participation. We have included in this report a summary of each of these program components and a description of the competency testing program for each district. One note of caution: Due to new legislation, community needs and the continuing validation process these programs are changing rapidly. The accuracy of the descriptions that we have provided here will necessarily fade some with time. In addition, it should be kept in mind that although broadly defined for this report, minimum competency programs do not include the standard achievement testing efforts found in almost all school districts.

### SURVEY RESULTS

#### When the Programs Began

Of the twenty-eight Council members surveyed for this report, twenty-six have either implemented or are developing a minimal competency testing program. Twenty of the twenty-six districts initiated or pilot-tested their minimal competency programs between 1975 and 1978. Boston is just now getting started, and

Buffalo and New York are changing programs because of alterations in their state-wide Regents Exams. The oldest programs include those in Atlanta, whose testing was initiated by the State in 1971; Dallas, which developed its own exam-- "The Basic Objectives Assessment Test" (BOAT) -- in 1974; and Denver whose "Proficiency and Review Test" has been used since 1960, fifteen years prior to state mandate.

Despite the fact that most of the programs have been developed and piloted, only six districts - Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Portland, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia - already base their diplomas, in part, on scores obtained on the minimal competency exams. Pittsburgh's requirement will go into effect with the class of 1980; and twelve other systems' with the class of 1981. Dade County's and Atlanta's program requirements will become effective with the classes of 1983 and 1985 respectively. The graduation requirement of the Florida state program, in which Dade County participates, was recently challenged in U.S. District Court. The Court ruled that the State could not make its functional literacy test a requirement for graduation until all vestiges of school segregation were removed. The validity of the exam was upheld but its alleged racial bias convinced the Court to postpone its use as a graduation determinant until 1983. The case is now being appealed.

Initiators of the Tests:

Approximately 36 states are actively developing or using minimum competency tests. There are, at present, four states, in which the Council has member districts, for which there is no state mandated minimum competency testing program: Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Pennsylvania (See Table 1). Therefore it is not surprising that in Ohio, neither Toledo nor Cleveland have minimum

Table 1. COUNCIL STATES HAVING MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTING\*

School System	Govt. level setting standards	Grade levels assessed	Test used for grade promotion	Test used for high school graduation
California	state & local	4-6, 7-9, 10-11	no	yes
Colorado	local	9-12	no	no
Florida	state & local	3,5,8,11	yes	yes
Georgia	state	4,8,11	no	no
Illinois	local	optional	no	no
Louisiana	state	4,8,11	no	no
Maryland	state	3,7,9,11	yes	yes
Massachusetts	local	optional	no	no
Michigan	state	4,7,10	no	no
Minnesota	no program	no program	no	no
Missouri	state	8	no	no
New York	state	3,6,8,9, 10,11,12	no	yes
Ohio	no program	no program	no	no
Oregon	local	optional	no	yes
Pennsylvania	no program	no program	no	no
Tennessee	state & local	4,5,6,8,11, 12	no	yes
Texas	no program	no program	no	no
Virginia	state & local	k-6, 9-12	no	yes
Washington	local	4-8	no	no
Washington, DC	local	k-8, 9-12	no	no
Wisconsin	no program	no program	no	no

\*Data from Education Commission of The States. States Activity - Minimum Competency Testing, January, 1979.

competency testing. Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh all have full-fledged competency testing efforts. The remaining Council districts are located in states mandating some form of competency testing.

There are four Council districts that have adopted their state-level competency tests: Buffalo, New York City, St. Louis and Dade County. Norfolk is using exams developed by the state and by private firms for the state. On the other hand, six districts have designed programs before state mandate. They include: Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, New Orleans and Seattle. Dallas and the state of Texas are now negotiating over whether Dallas can continue to use its own locally developed exam or will have to implement the state test when it is completed. In five other instances, the state has passed legislation requiring the district to develop its own tests: Oakland, Long Beach, San Francisco, Memphis and Nashville. The State of Oregon requires that districts set competency standards but does not mandate their measurement by test; Portland has elected to do so, however. One other district, Boston, is now under state mandate and will be allowed to choose a state-developed exam, a commercial exam approved by the state or a locally-designed test also approved by the state. (See Table 2, column 3 and 4.)

The origins of the programs in Atlanta, Baltimore, and Los Angeles are a bit more complicated. The state of Georgia was the prime sponsor for the program now in the Atlanta Schools. Georgia has operated a state-wide assessment program since 1971. The Atlanta Schools use two tests produced by the state according to state mandate and another test - the "Life Role Skills" exam - that was required by the state but is being developed locally. Baltimore has a two-tiered program. The locally-developed test grew out of work done in 1975 in Baltimore and the state exam was initiated in 1976. Baltimore has decided, in fact, to implement the Maryland exam a full three years ahead of the rest



Table 2. Characteristics of Great City School Competency Testing

School System	Grades Tested with Competency Exams		Test Producers	Test Origin	Metric used to Report Scores
	Elementary Grades k-8	Secondary Grades 9-12			
Atlanta	4 & 8	10,11	state & local	state legislature	not determined yet
Baltimore	1-8	9 or passing	state & local	state legislature & local board	% items correct
Boston	1-8	9 or passing	state & local	state board of education	not determined yet
Buffalo	3,6,8	9-12	state	state board of education	stanines & % items correct
Chicago	8	until passing	local	local board	stanines & % items correct
Dade County	3,5,8	11	state	state legislature	% items correct
Dallas	3,6,8	9-12	local	local board	% items correct
Denver	no program	9 or passing	local	local board	raw scores
Detroit	no program	10 or passing	local & contract	local board	not determined yet
Long Beach	8	until passing	McGraw-Hill	state legislature	standard score
Los Angeles	1-6,7	10 or passing	local	state legislature & local board	raw scores
Memphis	4,5,6,8	11 or passing	state & contract	state board of education	% items correct
Milwaukee	no program	10 or passing	Harcourt Brace	local board	stanines & raw scores
Minneapolis	8	9,10,12	McGraw-Hill	local board	N/A
Nashville	4,5,6,8	11 or passing	state & contract	state board of education	% items correct
New Orleans	4,5,6,8	9-12	state & contract	state legislature & local board	% items correct
New York City	3,6,8	9-12	state	state board of education	stanines & % items correct
Norfolk	1-4	9,10	state & contract	state legislature	% items correct
Oakland	no program	9 or passing	local & contract	state legislature	% items correct
Philadelphia	no program	10 or passing	local	local board	% items correct
Pittsburgh	no program	11	ETS	local board	standard scores
Portland	3-8	9 or passing	local	state legislature & local board	grade equivalents & rasch scales
St. Louis	8	until passing	state	state board of education	% items correct
Seattle	3,6	9,11 or passing	local	local board	raw scores
San Francisco	3,5,8	9 or passing	local	state legislature	% items correct
Washington DC	k-8	9-12	local & McGraw-Hill	local board	grade equivalents & percentile ranks



of the state. Los Angeles has one of the most extensive competency examination programs in the country, most of which was initiated and developed locally in accordance with state mandate.

In summary, thirteen of the twenty-six Council districts developed at least part of their competency-based testing prior to state law. Eight have designed or are designing all or parts of their program locally in response to State mandate and five have adopted their states' or a state recommended program as their own.

Test Usage:

Competency tests serve five different purposes in the districts surveyed for this report: 1.) determining graduation, 2.) deciding on student promotion, 3.) identifying students for diagnosis 4.) placing students for remedial work, and 5.) developing accountability and district policy and monitoring system-wide academic achievement. Of the twenty-six districts with a competency testing program twenty-one will use the results to determine in part whether or not students will graduate with a district diploma (See Table 3). Almost half of these twenty districts are located in states mandating that students pass the tests in order to graduate (See Table 1 column 4). In most of the districts with this graduation requirement, students not passing the exams do not or will not receive diplomas. They will, instead, receive a certificate of performance (Atlanta), a lower-grade diploma (Chicago), a certificate of attendance (Denver), a letter of candidacy for graduation (Milwaukee), or other similar forms of recognition. Pittsburgh and Seattle permit a student failing the competency exam to enroll in a remedial course. Upon passing he or she may graduate with a diploma.

Table 3. Purposes of the Competency Testing

<u>School System</u>	<u>Test passage current requirement for graduation</u>	<u>Next class re-quired to pass exam for graduation</u>	<u>Test used to determine promotion</u>	<u>No graduation or promotion requirement despite test program</u>	<u>Must pass remedial class to graduate</u>	<u>Test used for placement in remedial classes</u>
Atlanta		1985	limited basis			
Baltimore	yes		limited basis			yes
Boston				yes	yes	yes
Buffalo		1981				yes
Chicago	yes		to receive grade & diploma			
Dade County		1983				yes
Dallas		1981				yes
Denver	yes					yes
Detroit		1981				
Long Beach		1981				yes
Los Angeles		1981				yes
Memphis		1981				yes
Milwaukee	yes					yes
Minneapolis				yes		yes
Nashville		1981				yes
New Orleans			limited basis	yes		
New York City		1981				yes
Norfolk		1981				yes
Oakland		1981				yes
Philadelphia	yes					yes
Pittsburgh						yes
Portland	yes					yes
St. Louis				yes		yes
Seattle		1981				yes
San Francisco		1981	yes			yes
Washington DC				yes		

Some cities, however, administer competency exams in the secondary grades but do not require that students pass to graduate. Minneapolis and St. Louis, for instance, use the test results for diagnostic purposes only and award diplomas on the traditional criteria of grades and attendance.

The second purpose for which these tests are being used is to decide upon a student's promotion or retention in grade. Only Atlanta and Baltimore use their exams in this way in addition to the more traditional criteria for promotion from grade to grade; New Orleans and Chicago are exploring the possibility of testing for promotion from the elementary to the secondary grades. San Francisco requires that a student pass tests in grades 3, 5 and 8 to be promoted. Students who do not pass are required to attend summer schools, after which they may be formally promoted.

Thirdly, the tests are used to identify academic weaknesses and to place students in remedial classes. Twenty-two of the districts listed diagnostic and placement uses for their competency exams. Apparently, the tests are used as widely for diagnostic purposes in the upper grades as they are in the lower, and provide one of the more useful tools for identifying weak spots in the progress of individual students. Most districts have developed or are developing minimum achievement scores below which a student will be placed for remedial coursework.

The fourth purpose for which the results of competency-based tests are being used involves local management decision-making and policy formulation. Five of the surveyed districts described this as one of the uses to which they put their tests, but it is likely that other systems are also making policy decisions on the basis of student performance. Atlanta, for instance, uses the

results of its testing for decision-making in areas such as staffing, allocation of instructional resources, and classroom planning. Baltimore assigns staff in reading and mathematics to schools, in part, on the basis of needs identified by its locally-developed "Proficiency Tests." Norfolk uses results more at the classroom level to assist teachers in recognizing individual student needs, while Portland uses its to assist in the evaluation of regular and special programs (e.g. Title I and Gifted and Talented.)

The final use to which these tests appear to be put involves monitoring and accountability. Only eight districts made mention of this; however, we would assume that other districts are doing the same. More districts than ever before are publicizing their test results as a way of appearing more accountable to the tax-payer. Dade County, Detroit, Philadelphia and others, in fact, are making their scores available to the public in an attempt to assure their communities that their high school graduates have attained a certain level of competence on which local employers can rely.

Skills Assessed by the Tests:

The Council survey found tremendous agreement among the testing programs as to what skills are examined (See Table 4). All of the districts but one have or are planning a competency testing program that include the assessment of basic reading skills; all but two include mathematics; and all but six examine fundamental writing, composition or communication skills. The only district that omits both reading and mathematics from its testing is Washington, DC, where the program focuses the traditional academic subjects on practical applications in communications, consumerism, and social, political and personal areas.

Table 4. Skills Tested Under Minimal Competency Programs

School System	Reading	Mathematics	Writing & Communicating (Language Arts)	Subj. Areas (Science & Social Studies)	Life Skills Practical Applications	Career Development
Atlanta	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Baltimore	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Boston	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Buffalo	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Chicago	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Dade County	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Dallas	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Denver	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Detroit	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Long Beach	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Los Angeles	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Memphis	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Milwaukee	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Minneapolis	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Nashville	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
New Orleans	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
New York City	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Norfolk	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Oakland	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Philadelphia	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Pittsburgh	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Portland	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
St. Louis	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Seattle	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
San Francisco	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Washington	no	no	no	no	yes	no

There are a number of cities that include in their assessment of basic skills examinations of subject areas, life skills and career development. As part of their state-wide program, Buffalo and New York City measure student knowledge in a variety of traditional academic areas beyond basic reading and mathematics. Dallas is currently validating competency exams in science and social studies; St. Louis in government and economics. Only two districts, Atlanta and Chicago, include assessments of career skills as part of their competency program. Atlanta also has designed a series of practical performance measures in coping with personal and consumer problems that students must demonstrate before graduation. Chicago, Dade County, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Seattle and Dallas have built parts of their basic skills exams around the mastery of practical problems in such areas as finance, health, transportation, community resources, consumerism and employment.

Grades Being Tested:

The grade levels tested under the competency-based programs vary considerably from one district to another (See Table 2, columns 1 and 2). The most common pattern emerging from a very mixed picture was found at the secondary grade levels, especially in districts requiring a passing test score for graduation. In those cases, students are tested in either the ninth or tenth grades and re-tested until passing. In many districts, students who pass the test(s) in ninth or tenth grade are not required to take the tests again. Other districts simply test every year or every other year through the 12th grade. All districts that have implemented or are planning a competency program included the secondary grades.

The programs at the elementary grade levels are more diverse. In six



districts - Denver, Detroit, Milwaukee, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh - there are no elementary competency testing programs, despite their presence in the secondary grades. Eleven systems begin their elementary grade competency testing in the third or the fourth grades; five districts begin the testing as early as kindergarten and first grade. Four districts - Chicago, Long Beach, Minneapolis and St. Louis - wait until students are in eighth grade before administering a competency-based exam.

Ways Scores Are Reported:

In the twenty-two districts that have decided on a metric for reporting district-wide testing results, fourteen report their scores to the public in the form of "percent of answers correct", three by raw scores, two by grade equivalent scores, two by standard scores and one by a Rasch based curriculum scale. (See Table 2, column 5). A number of districts use both a standard score or percentile ranking technique and the number of pupils passing the test. In addition to the lack of comparability in test metrics, districts have different cut-offs for passing the various tests administered within their own schools. Baltimore, for instance, sets a mark of 70% correct as passing on its own locally-designed "Proficiency Test", but the state of Maryland uses a mark of 80% on its "Functional Reading Exams." Chicago uses an 80% mark to determine minimal mastery on its "End of Cycle Tests" and 60% on its proficiency exams.

This lack of congruence presents no significant problem for local administrators except when there is a desire to compare the results of a given district with other urban districts or with the nation as a whole. In some states with a well-developed state-wide competency testing program, it is now possible to begin comparing the scores in urban districts against other systems in the same state. The state-of-the-art does not permit comparisons much past the state level, however.

Policies for Special Students:

The presence of minimal competency testing programs in schools presents a number of practical problems for special students, e.g. mentally and physically handicapped and bilingual students. School systems are struggling to develop policies for testing these students, but for the most part those policies remain not well developed. Still, many of the Council districts with minimum competency programs now have formulated some system-wide policy to act as the guideline for building-level practice. (See Table 5). This survey examined these policies for two categories of students: bilingual and handicapped.

At present, the urban districts have very little in common in the way they handle bilingual students. Seven districts, Atlanta, Detroit, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Norfolk, Pittsburgh and St. Louis -- have no formal policy for testing these children. Nine other districts -- Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, Seattle, San Francisco and Philadelphia -- require all students to pass the competency exams in English before they can graduate with a diploma. (California districts are under state mandate with regard to the English requirement.) Only Washington, DC completely exempts a student if his or her English speaking ability is limited.

The remaining nine districts use some other kind of policy allowing exemptions on a more flexible basis. Transitional students or newly arrived foreign students are exempt from competency tests in Boston and Milwaukee according to district-wide policy. In Portland and Dallas, students may take the exam in some language other than English if they choose. The policies for Buffalo and New York City, which were written by the state, require the use of alternative testing methods for the assessments without specifying their exact nature.



Table 5. Policies for Special Students

<u>School System</u>	<u>Mentally Handicapped Students</u>	<u>Physically Handicapped Students</u>	<u>Bilingual Students</u>	<u>Other Students</u>
Atlanta	exempt from tests	no policy	no policy	no other students exempt
Baltimore	level three & above students exempt	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Boston	must meet IEP standards	must meet IEP standards	transitional students exempt	students entering system after grade 10 exempt
Buffalo	alternative methods to testing used	no policy	alternative methods to testing used	High scores on CEEB and ACT exempt
Chicago	must take tests for diagnosis if IEP specifies	must follow IEP	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Dade County	EMR,TMR,PMR exempt unless parents request	blind students assessed with special tools	some students exempt	some emotionally handicapped exempt
Dallas	students w/special education class exempt	no policy	tests may be taken in English or Spanish	no other students exempt
Denver	not required to take test unless diploma desired	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Detroit	no policy	no policy	no policy	no policy
Long Beach	must meet IEP standards	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Los Angeles	must meet IEP standards	blind students assessed in Braille	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Memphis	exempt unless student requests	blind students assessed in Braille	no policy	no other students exempt
Milwaukee	TMR,EMR,LD exempt from tests	visually handicapped exempt	newly arrived foreign exempt	no other students exempt
Minneapolis	individual instructors decide on testing	individual instructors decide on testing	no policy	no other students exempt
Nashville	exempt unless student requests	blind students assessed in Braille	no policy	no other students exempt
New Orleans	must meet IEP standards	no policy	no policy	no other students exempt
New York City	alternative methods to testing used	no policy	alternative methods if English is limited	high scores on CEEB and ACT exempt
Norfolk	special provisions made	special provisions made	no policy	no other students exempt
Oakland	must meet IEP standards	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Philadelphia	exempt from tests	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Pittsburgh	EMR exempt from tests	no policy	no policy	no other students exempt
Portland	mainstreamed not exempt	waiver can be secured	can take exams in different languages	waivers can be secured in some cases
St. Louis	must meet IEP standards	must meet IEP standards	no policy	no other students exempt
Seattle	must meet IEP standards	tests read aloud to blind students	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
San Francisco	must meet lower testing standards	no policy	must pass tests in English	no other students exempt
Washington DC	exempt from tests	no policy	exempt if English is limited	no other students exempt

\* EMR-Educable Mentally Retarded; TMR-Trainable Mentally Retarded; PMR-Profoundly Mentally Retarded; LD-Learning Disabled

Dade County, Nashville and Memphis have flexible requirements in that individual students may seek exemptions or waivers if they desire.

The policies for handicapped students are considerably more complex since there are so many categories of disability. Students who are physically handicapped are, for the most part, under no special district testing exemption. Fourteen districts in all are without a clearly formulated plan. Five other districts - Dade County, Los Angeles, Memphis, Nashville and Seattle - make special provisions to administer tests to blind students in Braille, aloud or in raised-print. Milwaukee has exempted all visually handicapped students from testing and four others - Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Louis - follow the standards laid out in each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Norfolk and Portland allow waivers in some cases and use available testing instruments in others. No type of physical handicap other than visual was covered in any of the districts' policies.

Nearly all of the districts have formulated policies with regards to mentally handicapped youngsters. Detroit alone had no such plan. Only five districts - Atlanta, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Washington, DC - have completely exempted mentally handicapped students; every other district has established an alternative arrangement. Eight districts, for example, simply require that the student meet the goals and objectives that have been spelled out in the IEP. Chicago requires the student to take its exam but uses the results only for diagnostic purposes. Dade County, Denver, Memphis and Nashville waive the testing requirements unless the student or the parents request otherwise. Students who are categorized as level three (in self-contained classes) and above are exempt in Baltimore; those enrolled in any special education classes

are excluded in Dallas, and in Portland any pupil who has not been mainstreamed is exempt. Mentally handicapped students in San Francisco are required to take the exams, but the district applies differing cut-off scores.

In very few cases are any other kinds of students other than special education or bilingual exempt from the competency exams. Some emotionally handicapped students are exempt on a case-by-case basis in Dade County and Portland and high-scorers on college entrance exams are waived in Buffalo and New York City. The only other special exemption was in Boston, where students who have entered the system after grade 10, although required to take the tests, will not have their results reported as part of the district-wide average.

The means by which waivers are used in the awarding of diplomas is one of the more controversial aspects of these tests. For the most part, all students are required to pass the exams if they choose to receive a diploma. Should a student seek a waiver or be exempted automatically, then most districts will grant a certificate other than a diploma when the graduation requirements go into effect. Parents are now challenging in the courts the withholding of diplomas from mentally-handicapped students who have met their IEPs but are unable to pass the competency exams.

#### The Roles of Parents and Teachers:

From the formal policies and reports from each of the systems it appears that special provisions are being made to keep parents and teachers informed about minimum competency testing. All of the districts are in the process of training their teachers in the purposes, administration and uses of the new tests. In many cases, the teachers are being asked to help develop, review or critique the exams as they are being designed.

The parents of students taking the exams are involved in a number of ways, ranging in some districts from informing them of their children's test results to establishing regular training sessions for parents at PTA meetings. Such training usually includes information on the test purposes, how the results will be used and various privacy statutes in effect. Parent oversight committees are also used in some few districts.

### Conclusions

Minimum competency testing programs in the city schools are simply too varied to draw any but the most general conclusions about their merit. There are a number of questions, both technical and metaphysical, concerning these tests unasked in this report for the sake of simple but needed description. The issue of how well these exams are constructed, for instances, is likely to be one of the next major areas of research in the competency testing field. Because these tests are being developed not only to improve educational accountability to the community but also to make very serious decisions about the lives of young people, their use will come under greater local scrutiny than even the traditional standardized achievement batteries. Very little is known at this point about how carefully norms are constructed, how stable the results are, how the results might advantage one group over another, nor how accurate their predictive utility might be. The most fundamental issue over how competent is competent has not been adequately addressed; nor has the issue of whether or not a passing score has any practical value been satisfactorily determined.

Still the city schools are under great pressure to improve the quality of their education. In response, urban educators have labored over the last few years to design standards that the schools can point to when asked about

the quality of their graduates. This is a significant and rather compelling development; the public schools have rarely been so willing to defend quantitatively the capabilities of their most important product: an educated populace.

Appendices



Atlanta

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. Carole S. McCarron  
Research Associate  
Division of Research and Evaluation  
210 Pryor Street, SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 659-3381

2. The title of the testing program

-Georgia Student Assessment Program, criterion referenced  
-Contemporary Life Role Skills performance indicators, part of the state High School Graduation Requirements

3. Producer of the test(s).

-The Georgia Student Assessment Tests are developed by the state.  
-The state will develop performance indicators for the adult life role of the Learner. Performance indicators for the adult life roles of the Individual, Citizen, Consumer and Producer will be developed by Atlanta.

4. Skill(s) tested.

-The Georgia Student Assessment Tests measure essential objectives in reading mathematics and career development.  
-The Competency Life Role Skills (measured for high school graduation) include Learner, Individual, Citizen, Consumer and Producer performance standards.

5. Grade(s) tested.

-Georgia Student Assessment Tests-Grades 4, 8, 10 and 11.  
-The Competency Life Role Skills performance indicators-to be administered during high school prior to graduation.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

- "The Primary aim" of the Georgia Student Assessment Program is "providing information to educational policy and decision-makers, to teachers, to students, to parents and to concerned citizens." The results are one of several criteria for promotion. The program also includes norm-referenced tests administered "to a stratified random sample of students from throughout the state" "to monitor the progress of Georgia students in relation to a national sample of students". The tests are also used for "making decisions regarding staffing, allocation of instructional resources, classroom instructional planning and the like."



-Demonstrated competency in the Contemporary Life Role Skills is one requirement for graduation. Students who do not demonstrate competence on the first performance indicators will receive remedial assistance. "Those students who have met some, but not all, of the requirements for the diploma and have chosen to end the formal school experience, will receive certificates of performance verifying the skills they have acquired."

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

-Georgia Student Assessment Program -- NA  
-Contemporary Life Role Skills performance indicators-metric not developed yet.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

-The Georgia Student Assessment Program was initiated in 1971. In FY79 a readiness test for use in Kindergarten will be completed.  
-The High School Graduation Requirements Policy was adopted by the state legislature in November, 1976 and amended in December, 1978. The adult life role of a Learner performance indicators will apply to all students enrolling in Grade 9 in school year 1981-82. The adult life role of Individuals, Citizens, Consumers and Producers performance indicators will apply to all students enrolling in Grade 10 in school year 1982-83. The program will be piloted in Atlanta during school year 1979-80.

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

The State has initiated and developed both testing programs. While the state will develop the performance indicators for assessing the adult life role of a Learner Standards, Atlanta will develop the performance indicators for assessing the adult life role of Individuals, Citizens, Consumers and Producers standards.

10. Policy for bilingual students.

No specific policy on bilingual students has been prepared as of yet.

11. Policy for special education students.

Mentally handicapped students are exempted from the Georgia Student Assessment program. No policy has been formulated regarding special education students for the high school graduation requirements.

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

No other students are exempted from either test.

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

In-service training is available for teachers. Students and parents receive/will receive copies of the scores.

Baltimore

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Mr. Jacob Schuchman, Coordinator  
Office of Proficiency Testing  
Baltimore Public Schools  
3 East 25th Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(301) 396-4629

Mr. Leonard Granick, Director  
Office of Testing and evaluation  
Baltimore Public Schools  
3 East 25th Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(301) 396 4629

2. The title of the testing program

*Proficiency Tests in Reading, Mathematics and Writing, a part of Baltimore's Program for Instructional Improvement. Criterion referenced.  
Maryland Functional Reading Test, part of Project Basic, The Maryland State Department of Education's Competency Program.*

3. Producer of the test (s).

*Proficiency Tests are produced by the Baltimore Public Schools. Maryland Functional Reading Test is produced by the Maryland Department of Education.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Proficiency Tests-Reading, Mathematics and Writing.  
Maryland Functional Reading Test-Reading. The state is adding mathematics effective September 1979.*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Proficiency: Reading-Grades 3-9. If a student does not answer at least 70% of the items correctly on the terminal test in grade 9, he/she may take the test twice each following year through grade 12 after placement in a remedial class until passing.*

*Proficiency: Math-Grades 3-8. If a student does not answer at least 70% of the items correctly on the terminal test in grade 8 he/she may take the test twice each following year through grade 12 after placement in a remedial class until passing.*

*Proficiency: Writing-Grades 1-9. If a student does not answer at least 70% of the total weighted scores correctly on the terminal test in grade 9, he/she may take the test twice each following year through grade 12 after placement in a remedial class until passing.*

*Maryland Functional Reading Test-Grades 7,9. If a student does not answer 80% of the items correctly on the test in grade 9, he/she may take the test twice each following year through grade 12 until passing.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The Proficiency Tests in Reading, Mathematics and Writing are only one piece of Baltimore's Program for Instructional Improvement. The tests are used to identify students in need of remedial assistance, to aid in the determination of promotion or retention, and, as of the class of 1979, to determine whether a student may graduate. Staff in reading, mathematics and writing are assigned to schools on the basis of needs demonstrated through the Proficiency Tests.

The Maryland Functional Reading Test is part of the statewide Project Basic. It is currently being used to identify students with functional reading deficiencies for remedial assistance. As of the class of 1982, students must answer 80% of the items correctly in order to graduate--implementation of state requirement. Baltimore requires passing of the Maryland Functional Reading Test as of the class of 1979.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

Proficiency Test-% items correct.

Maryland Functional Reading Test-% items correct. Baltimore also uses average percent correct.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

The Proficiency Tests are an outgrowth of a 1975 document of reasonable expectations in reading, mathematics and writing produced by the Baltimore Offices of Reading, Mathematics and English. Promotional and graduation policies were adopted by the City of Baltimore Board of Commissioners in March, 1978. The class of 1979 is the first class to graduate under the new policy.

The Maryland Functional Reading Test was initiated in 1976 and will be used as a state requirement for graduation for the class of 1982. Baltimore used it as a requirement for graduation for the class of 1979, opting to precede the state by three years.

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

The Baltimore Public Schools initiated the Proficiency Testing Program. The Maryland Functional Reading Test is a State legislative mandate.

10. Policy for bilingual students.

Bilingual students must pass all tests in English in order to graduate.

11. Policy for special education students.

Special education students classified above level three (self-contained classrooms and higher) are exempted from the tests.

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

No other students are exempted from the tests.

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Specialist in reading, mathematics and writing (English) train Faculty. Monthly meeting are held with department heads. Principals attended a day long conference during school year 1978-79. Parents are trained at PTA meetings on local school level. Both parents and teachers are involved in reviewing the tests. The media is notified of policies and programs through press releases.*

Boston

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Thomas R. Deveny  
Coordinator of Basic Skills  
Office of Curriculum and Competency  
Boston Public Schools  
26 Court Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 726 6446

2. The title of the testing program

Basic Skills Improvement Program

3. Producer of the test(s).

Boston will develop evaluation instruments for the early and later elementary levels and will either use an instrument made available by the Department of Education, chose an instrument from the Department of Education's approved list or present its own instrument for Department of Education approval for the secondary level.

4. Skill(s) tested.

Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Speaking and Listening

5. Grade(s) tested.

Although the Basic Skills Improvement Program has not been implemented in Boston yet, the Department of Education has allowed for Boston to select the actual grades to be evaluated within three categories: early elementary - grades 1-3; later elementary - grades 4-6; secondary - grades 7-12. On the secondary level, students must be evaluated by grade 9. If a student does not pass the secondary level evaluation, he/she must have an opportunity to take the test at least once each following year through grade 12 until passing.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The purpose of the entire Basic Skills Improvement Program is "to improve attainment of basic skills competency by students in public schools in the Commonwealth." The evaluations will not be used as the single determinant of graduation or promotion. Students will be identified for follow-up instructional programs and services. If a student has not attained the minimum standards of basic skills by grade 11, the principal may refer her/him for an evaluation under state law Chapter 766 for special education.



BOSTON (cont.)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Metric not determined until instruments have been chosen.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*In January, 1979, the State Department of Education issued the Basic Skills Improvement Policy and Regulations. Evaluation of student achievement of minimum standards in reading, writing and mathematics begins in school year 1980-81. Evaluation of student achievement of minimum standards in listening and speaking as well as reading, writing and mathematics begins in school year 1981-82.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The Basic Skills Improvement Program was developed by the State Board of Education with input from the different regions of the state.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Students in transitional bilingual education programs are exempted from the Basic Skills Improvement Program.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special education students follow their Individualized Education Plans and may be required to attain minimum standards for basic skills competency if their evaluation team so decides.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*Boston may exempt any student who transfers into the school district after completing tenth grade from being included in the final report to the state of students who have not achieved the minimum standards for each basic skill.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*There is an advisory committee of educators, parents and students on the state level advising the Board of Education. Parents and students are involved in all stages of the Basic Skills Improvement Program development.*

Buffalo

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Ronald E. Banks  
Director of Evaluation  
Board of Education  
Room 7092, City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
(716) 842 4660

2. The title of the testing program:

Pupil Evaluation Program Tests (PEP)  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests  
Basic Competency Tests  
Regents Competency Tests  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations

3. Producer of the test(s).

All tests produced by the New York State Education Department.

4. Skill(s) tested.

PEP-Reading and Mathematics  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests-Reading and Writing.  
Basic Competency Tests - Reading, Mathematics and Writing.  
Regents Competency Tests - Reading, Mathematics and Writing.  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations - in regents subject areas.

5. Grades(s) tested.

PEP-Grades 3,6  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests-Grades 8,9  
Basic Competency Tests - Grade 9  
Regents Competency Tests- Mathematics - Grade 9 or after completion of the required unit of mathematics. Reading and Writing - Grades 11 and/ 12.  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations - after completion of subjects covered by Regents Comprehensive Examinations.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

Except in a few cases (see #10 - 12), all students must pass either the Regents Competency Test, Basic Competency Test, or Regents Comprehensive Examinations in English and Mathematics in order to graduate. All tests are used to identify students for remedial assistance except the Regents Comprehensive Examinations which are used for indicating academic excellence.

BUFFALO (cont.)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*PEP-Statewide reference point in stanine terms.*

*Preliminary Regents Competency Test - common degrees of reading power unit scales*

*Basic Competency Test - all standardized metrics*

*Regents Competency Test - statewide reference point*

*Regents Comprehensive Examinations - % passing score*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The regulations and procedures for the Regents Competency Testing Program were published in 1979. As of the class of 1982, the Basic Competency Test will be completely phased out and students will take either the Regents Competency Tests or the Regents Comprehensive Examinations as a graduation requirement. The PEP tests and Regents Preliminary Competency Tests in reading, writing and mathematics are first being used for the class of 1981.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*All of the tests are developed by the state and used on a state-wide basis.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*"Alternative testing techniques" are used for "pupils whose native language is other than English who first enter, after grade eight, schools where the predominant language of instruction is English."*

11. Policy for special education students.

*"Alternative testing techniques" are used for "pupils with handicapping conditions."*

12. Any other students exempted from the test (s).

*Students are exempted from a test requirement for graduation if they have scored above a certain level on College Entrance Examination Board tests or American College Testing Program tests. "Alternative tests" may be used for students "who have not passed the examinations...because of extraordinary administrative circumstances not caused by the willful act of the pupil or of a teacher or administrator."*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Parents are notified of remedial needs and the test results by the principal. Teachers and administrators receive in-service training. Media has published a copy of a sample Regents Competency Test.*



Chicago

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. Angeline P. Caruso  
Associate Superintendent  
Curriculum and Instruction Services  
228 N. LaSalle  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 641-4050  
(End-of-Cycle and Criterion Reference Testing)

Dr. Elmer M. Casey, Administrator  
Bureau of City-Wide Testing  
Board of Education  
Department of Research & Evaluation  
2021 N. Burling St.,  
Chicago, IL 60614  
(314) 641 7310  
(For Minimum Proficiency Skills  
Testing)

2. The title of the testing program

Criterion Reference Testing, End-of-Cycle Testing, Minimum Proficiency Skills Testing.

3. Producer of the test(s)

Proficiency Tests are produced by the Department of Research and Evaluation. Criterion Reference Tests and End-of Cycle Tests are produced by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Services.

4. Skill(s) tested.

-End of Cycle Tests and Criterion Reference Tests-different skills required to proceed to the next cycle  
-Proficiency Skills Tests-Language Arts, computation and problem solving skills measured by problems relating to finance, occupational knowledge, health, community resources, government and law, communications and transportation.

5. Grade(s) tested.

-End of Cycle Tests offered when a student is ready to advance to the next cycle or when the teacher and principal feel they need an additional overall check to determine placement in the next cycle.  
-Proficiency Skills Test-first offered in Grade 8. If a student does not pass the test, he/she has at least six more opportunities to pass through Grade 12.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

-The End-of-Cycle Tests are used to identify students in need of remedial assistance early in the educational process. A student must pass the tests to receive a Grade 8 diploma.  
-The Proficiency Skills Test must be passed in order to graduate from high school. Students who fail, receive remedial assistance in a Proficiency Skills Course and/or a Double Period English and a Reading Laboratory Course.

CHICAGO (cont.)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

- End-of-Cycle Tests-minimum mastery of 80% of the key objectives on a cumulative basis
- Proficiency Testing - 60% (third stanine) is the cutoff score.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

The Chicago Board of Education adopted the superintendent's recommendation for a program of instructional intervention for proficiency skills on April 28, 1976. The tests were piloted in 1977. Beginning with the 1977-78 school year, both tests are offered annually in the spring. As of the class of 1979, students must pass the tests in order to graduate. The intervention plan was part of a Board Report 77-212-12 dated July 13, 1979.

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

End of Cycle Testing and Proficiency Skills Instructional Intervention and Testing Programs were initiated by the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Services and the Department of Research and Evaluation.

10. Policy for bilingual students.

Bilingual students must pass the tests in English in order to receive high school diplomas.

11. Any other students exempted from the test (s).

"Special Education students, with the exception of those enrolled only in Speech Correction, are to participate in the Minimum Proficiency Skills Test for diagnostic purposes only." Students are required to meet the criteria in their IEP in order to graduate. The IEP may include the passing of the Proficiency Skills Test as a requirement for graduation.

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

No other students are exempted from the tests.

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

Administrators and teachers receive in-service training. Parents of students who fail the tests are notified. The media has been used to publicize the tests.

Cleveland

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Dr. Marian Kilbane-Flash  
Division of Research and Development  
Cleveland Public Schools  
1380 E. Sixth Street  
Cleveland, OH 44114  
(216) 696-2929, X301*

*While Cleveland does administer an extensive program of standardized achievement tests to students in all grades, Cleveland has not adopted a competency testing program.*

Dade County

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. Robert S. Stephenson, Supervisor  
Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Room 713  
Dade County Public Schools  
Lindsey Hopkins Building  
1410 NE Second Avenue  
Miami, FL 33132  
(305) 350-3862

2. The title of the testing program

The Statewide Assessment Program includes State Assessment Tests, Part I and Part II. Part II was formerly called the Functional Literacy Test.

3. Producer of the test(s).

State of Florida.

4. Skill(s) tested.

Both tests measure mathematics and communications skills (reading and writing). The State Assessment Test, Part II measures a pupil's ability to apply the basic skills to real-life situations.

5. Grade(s) tested.

The Assessment Test, Part I--Grades 3, 5, 8 and 11. The State Assessment Test, Part II--Grade 11 and 12 (Grade 12--repeat or makeup). If a student does not pass Part II, he/she will have several opportunities to take it again until passing.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The purpose is to insure students meet state adopted minimum performance standards. As a result of a recent court decision, the first class that may be required to pass the State Assessment Test, Part II in order to receive a diploma will be the class of 1983. This court decision is currently being appealed. Remedial assistance is available for students in all grades who are identified by the assessment tests and the State Assessment Test, Part II. The Statewide Assessment Program is also used to demonstrate to the public how effectively Florida's educational goals are being met.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

Results are reported as follows:

Grades 3, 5, 8: Standard passed or failed

Grade 11, Part I: Standard passed or failed

Grade 11, Part II: Math and/or Communication Skills (each a standard) passed or failed.

DADE COUNTY (cont.)

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Education Accountability Act was passed by the Florida State Legislature in 1976. The Statewide Assessment Program was fully implemented in the school year 1977-78. The U.S. District Court, Tampa Division, decided on July 13, 1979 that the class of 1983 is the first class that may be required to pass the State Assessment, Part II Test as a requirement for graduation. This court decision is currently being appealed.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The State Legislature enacted the Education Accountability Act. The Florida Department of Education has developed the Statewide Assessment Program. The U.S. District Court, Tampa Division, declared that the State Assessment Test, Part II could not be used as a requirement for graduation until the class of 1983. This court decision is currently being appealed.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Some students unable to speak English are exempted from the tests.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Students who are Educable Mentally Retarded, Trainable Mentally Retarded, Hearing Impaired, Profoundly Mentally Retarded, Specific Learning Disabled and Emotionally Handicapped are exempted from the tests except by parental request. Blind and visually handicapped students are assessed with specially prepared materials in a separate testing. Certain exceptional students are allowed special testing conditions, such as flexible scheduling.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*Students with temporary physical and emotional problems may be exempted from testing by school officials.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Meetings are held with Citizen Advisory Groups or for any group that requests a meeting. A test chairperson, located in every school, conducts in-service training.*

Dallas

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Cordelia R. Alexander  
Executive Evaluator  
Dallas Independent School District  
3700 Ross Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75204  
(214) 324 5321

2. The title of the testing program

Basic Objectives Assessment Test (BOAT)

3. Producer of the test(s).

Dallas Independent School District

4. Skill(s) tested.

-The BOAT, Levels 3 and 6, measure Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. All 4 subtests are still in the validation process and changes are being made annually.

-The BOAT, Level 8-12, measures objectives in mathematics, science, social studies and language arts as applied in seven "functional application" areas: consumerism, community, medical, home employment, government and information sources.

5. Grade(s) tested.

Grades 3 and 6, and 8-12. Students who do not pass the BOAT, Level 8-12 in Grade 8 receive remedial assistance and may take the test once each following year through Grade 12.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

"The BOAT is a system-wide testing program through which the District is guaranteeing that all students so certified will meet a level of competency that has been determined to be the minimum to function effectively in our society." All students who do not pass receive remedial assistance. Passing the BOAT, Level 8-12 subtest is a graduation requirement as of the class of 1981.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

-BOAT Levels 3 and 6-% items correct. There is no cut off score.

-BOAT, Level 8-12 % items correct. The cut off score is 70% of the items correct across the entire test.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

The development of the BOAT commenced in school year 1974-75. It was first administered in school year 1977-78. As of the class of 1981, students taking the BOAT, Level 8-12 must meet the 70% items correct cut off in order to graduate.



DALLAS (cont.)

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The BOAT has been developed by the Dallas Independent School District. In 1979, the state of Texas introduced its own state-wide competency test, the Texas Assessment Project. It is not clear how the Texas Assessment will affect the status of the BOAT.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*All students are required to take the BOAT. As of school year 1979-80, the BOAT, Level 3 and 6, will be offered in Spanish as well as English. The BOAT, Level 8-12, is administered only in English.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Any student receiving more than two hours of special education each day is exempted.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*None.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Central office staff offers training programs to schools, citizen groups, etc. upon invitation. Test coordinators in each school conduct training sessions for teachers and parents.*



Denver

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Barry B. Beal  
Supervisor for Development and Evaluation  
Denver Public Schools  
900 Grant Street  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303) 837-1000 X2211*

2. The title of the testing program

*Proficiency and Review Test.*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Developed by Denver Public Schools.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Numerical, Spelling, Language and Reading.*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Offered twice a year beginning in Grade 9. Once a student has passed each test, he or she does not take the test again.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*Students who do not pass the Proficiency and Review Test "are programmed into established instructional programs in the basic skills areas to assist them in overcoming deficiencies." A student who does not pass the test by the conclusion of senior year does not receive a diploma but a certificate of attendance.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Raw score.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Proficiency and Review Test has been used since 1960. It has been revised once and the original administrative policy has been changed.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*While the Proficiency and Review Test has been used only as a local testing program, it coincides with the requirements of Colorado's 1975 state statute.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Students must pass the tests in English in order to obtain a diploma.*

DENVER (cont.)

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special education students are not required to take the tests because they receive a work-study diploma. If they desire a Denver high school diploma, they must pass the Proficiency and Review Test.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Parents are notified of scores at least twice yearly. Conferences are held at the parent's request. Published description of testing made available yearly for all personnel.*

Detroit

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Stuart C. Rankin  
Assistant Superintendent  
Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation  
Detroit Public Schools  
944 Schools Center  
5057 Woodward  
Detroit, MC 48202  
(313) 494-1100

2. The title of the testing program

*Detroit High School Proficiency Program, criterion referenced.*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Detroit Public Schools with assistance from the Instructional Objectives Exchange.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading, Mathematics and Writing*

5. Grade(s) tested

*Grades 10-12. If a student does not pass the test in grade 10, she/he may take it once again in each of the following two years.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*"The primary purpose of the test is to improve learning of fundamental skills by all Detroit students. A second purpose -also very important - is to guarantee to students, parents, employers, and the community at large that Detroit Public Schools graduates are proficient in key, commonly used reading, writing and mathematics skills." Students who pass the test will receive an academic diploma indicating that they have attained the designated skills.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Not yet available.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Board of Education approved the Detroit High School Proficiency Program in August, 1977, and will implement it in September, 1979. The first class required to pass the proficiency examination for graduation will be graduating in June, 1981.*

DETROIT (cont.)

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The Detroit High School Proficiency Program has been developed by the city of Detroit. It was not mandated by the state of Michigan.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*No policy has yet been formulated for bilingual students.*

11. Policy for Special education students.

*No policy has yet been formulated for special education students.*

12. Any other students exempted for the test(s).

*No other exemption policies have been formulated.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*The orientation program will include program manuals, orientation booklets, instructional materials and audio-visual presentations. Meetings will be scheduled at schools and regions to inform all parties about the program. The press and broadcast media will be provided with timely information about the program.*

Long Beach

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. Milton Sager  
Director of Curriculum  
Long Beach Unified School System  
701 Locust Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90813

Dr. James Edmondson  
Director of Research and Evaluation  
Long Beach Unified School System  
701 Locust Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90813

2. The title of the testing program.

*Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*The test is produced by McGraw-Hill, and has been modified by the local system to comply with the state minimum competency mandate.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Arithmetic and computation, reading and language expression.*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills is first administered to students in Grade 8 and can be retaken as often as desired through Grade 12. Different forms of the test are used in reexaminations.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s).

*The test is now being used to monitor district-wide academic achievement and for individual student diagnosis. Test results are used to place students in remedial coursework. With the class of 1981, students will be required to pass the exam to graduate with a district diploma.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*A standard score of 500 is used as the passing mark for the exam. When reporting results of individual tests to parents and teachers, the number of items missed in each category of the test is presented.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills was modified by the district and used as a competency-based exam in school year 1977-78, in response to California's AB 65.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The Long Beach Unified School District had used the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills for several years prior to AB 65 but not as a competency exam. The test's usage has been modified because of state law.*

Long Beach (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*AB 65 specified that all students must pass their locally developed competency exam in the English language before graduation.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Proficiency standards are set for each student in The Individualized Education Plan (IEP). A handicapped student will graduate with a district diploma upon satisfactory completion of the IEP.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*No special or formal training is offered.*

Los Angeles

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Robert Sallander  
Assistant Director, Research &  
Evaluation Branch  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
PO Box 3307  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 625-6389

Dr. Floraline Stevens  
Director, Research & Evaluation Branch  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
PO Box 3307  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 625 6389

2. The title of the testing program

SHARP-Senior High Assessment of Reading Proficiency  
TOPICS-Test of Performance in Computational Skills  
WRITE: SR. HIGH-Test of Performance in Composing/Enabling Skills  
ASC-Performance Assessment in Computation  
PAIR-Performance Assessment in Reading  
WRITE: JR. HIGH-Test of Performance in Composing/Enabling Skills  
Survey of Essential Skills (tests for K-6)  
Essential Skills Continuums (Kindergarten-Grade 6; Grades 7-12)\*

3. Producer of the test(s)

All of the tests and the continuums have been produced by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

4. Skill(s) tested

-SHARP-Comprehension and Location/Study Skills related to understanding/completion of application forms, financial transactions, information sources, pictorial representatives and written communications

-PAIR-Specific Vocabulary, Comprehension, Location/Study Skills related to understanding/completion of application forms, financial transactions, information sources, pictorial representations and written communications.

-TOPICS/ASC-Computation skills needed to identify and apply appropriate mathematical processes to given, relevant problem solving situations.

WRITE: SENIOR/JUNIOR HIGH-Enabling skills of standard grammar, spelling and syntactical sentence structure. Satisfactory completion of two writing samples in paragraph form a response to given prompt.

SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS for all areas has been delineated for Grades K-6 with annual mandated assessment at Grades 1-7 in Reading, Mathematics and Composition. Students not demonstrating competency in assessed skills declared as essential at each grade level will be given instruction indicated as needed by individual learner computer printouts of test responses.

\*The continuums are guides for teachers to use to teach the essential skills in sequential order.



5. Grade(s) tested.

-SHARP-Grade 10. If a student does not pass in Grade 10, he/she will, after remedial instruction, have three additional opportunities to pass before Grade 12 graduation date.

-TOPICS Same as SHARP.

-WRITE Same as SHARP.

-ASC-Grade 7. If a student does not demonstrate competency in Grade 7, he/she will receive instruction as part of the regular school program. Dates and number of opportunities for additional assessment is at the option of the local school.

-PAIR Same as ASC

-WRITE Same as ASC

-SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS Grades 1-6. As of Spring, 1979, the District has instituted an annual assessment of learners' abilities in reading, mathematic and composition skills declared for each grade in the Essential Skills Program.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

SHARP is used to identify students in need of instructional assistance in applying reading skills to the understanding/completion of printed material common to adult-life. As of the Class of 1979, students must pass SHARP in order to graduate with diploma.

TOPICS is used to identify students in need of assistance in determining and applying the specific mathematical processes/skills commonly used in adult-life problem solving activities. As of the Class of 1981, students must pass TOPICS in order to graduate with diploma.

WRITE: SR. HIGH is used to identify students in need of instructional assistance in developing and utilizing writing skills which reflect accepted standards. As of the Class of 1981, students must pass the test in order to graduate with diploma.

ASC is used to provide early identification of students in need of instructional assistance in developing/applying computation skills.

PAIR is used to provide early identification of students in need of instructional assistance in developing/applying specific Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Location/Study Skills.

WRITE: JR. HIGH is used to provide early identification of students in need of instructional assistance in developing/applying the writing skills necessary to compose written materials.

SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS serves to "delineate specific skills which can be taught and assessed at each grade level" and to "provide a viable base for the development of assessment instruments, which will measure at regular intervals whether the learner has developed the fundamental skills."

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

The metric for SHARP/TOPICS/WRITE SR. HIGH tests is raw score with a pass/fail cut-off. Schools receive computer printouts which indicate the specific skill needs of each tested student.

The metric for PAIR/ASC/WRITE JR. HIGH is a grouping of raw scores into three Ranges. Range 1 scores indicate no need for intervention. Range 2 scores indicate need for some assistance. Range 3 scores indicate marked need for instruction. Computer printouts provide specific skill need information for each student.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

SHARP was developed and extensively field-tested with over 20,000 students in Grades 8, 10, 12 and adult school in the period between 1972-75. In 1976, the Board of Education issued a policy requiring that students, as of the Class of 1979, pass SHARP in order to graduate. SHARP was first used in Fall 1976. New, parallel forms are developed each year to maintain test security and relevance.

TOPICS was developed and field-tested in 1976-77. In 1977, the Board of Education issued a policy requiring that students, as of the Class of 1981, pass TOPICS in order to graduate. TOPICS was first used in the Fall of 1978. New, parallel forms are developed each year to maintain test security and relevance.

WRITE: SR. HIGH was developed and field tested in 1976-77. In 1977, the Board of Education issued a policy requiring that students, as of the Class of 1981, pass WRITE: SR. HIGH in order to graduate. WRITE: SR. HIGH was first issued in the Fall of 1978. New, parallel forms are developed each year to maintain test security and relevance.

ASC was developed in response to policy by the Board of Education in 1977. ASC was first used in Fall, 1978. Beginning with the 1979-80 school year, assessment will be administered in the Spring semester.

PAIR was developed in response to a Board of Education policy of 1975. It was first used on an annual basis in Fall, 1978. Beginning with the 1979-80 school year, assessment will be administered in the Spring semester.

-Parallel forms are developed each year to maintain test security and relevance.

WRITE: JR. HIGH was developed in response to a Board of Education policy of 1977, and will be first used on an annual basis in Spring, 1980.

SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS was reviewed in May, 1978 and implemented in September, 1978. Assessment of Reading, Mathematics and Composition skills abilities were assessed in Grades 1-6 in Spring, 1979 and will be annually thereafter.

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

Los Angeles has developed its testing program in response to the Board of Education's integration plans for student achievement and California's 1977 AB 65 which mandated proficiency standard requirements for all public schools of the State.

LOS ANGELES (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*To fulfill legislative and Board requirements, bilingual students must pass the tests in English. School district staff are investigating the use of the Essential Skills Continuums in regards to limited-English and Non-English speaking students.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Requirements set for the assessment of handicapped students are based on a review of each student's Individualized Education Plan, judgement as to the ability of learners to fulfill requirements at varying levels of competency, then made by administrator and faculty after consultation with parents. Currently, SHARP assessment items of relevance to the non-sighted/partially sighted students are being translated into Braille and large print format.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*None.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*In-service training is available from District personnel as requested by school staffs, parents and community for prescriptive reports.*

Memphis

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Dr. Joyce Weddington  
Asst. Director of Planning,  
Evaluation, Research and Testing  
Memphis Public Schools  
2597 Avery Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38112  
(901) 454-5450*

2. The title of the testing program

*High School Proficiency Test  
Diagnostic Tests  
Basic Skills Test, Criterion referenced*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*It has not been determined who will produce the High School Proficiency Test.  
The State Department of Education has produced the Basic Skills Test with assistance from the Scholastic Testing Service.  
Each local school will develop diagnostic tests for either Grade 4, 5 or 6.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Mathematics and language arts (reading comprehension and vocabulary, grammar and spelling).*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*The Basic Skills Test is currently offered to students in Grade 8.  
The High School Proficiency Test will be offered to Grade 11 as of 1981. If a student does not pass the test in Grade 11, he/she will have two more opportunities to take the test before graduation. Diagnostic tests are also to be administered to either Grade 4, 5 or 6.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*The Basic Skills Test is being used only for diagnostic purposes in Grade 8. A separate diagnostic test will be offered to either Grade 4, 5 or 6. When the High school Proficiency Test is offered in Grade 11, students must pass it in order to graduate. Remedial assistance is offered to students who do not pass the tests.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*70% of the items answered correctly in each subtest is the cut-off score for passing the Basic Skills Test. No metric has been identified for the other tests.*

MEMPHIS (cont.)

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The initial State Board of Education mandate was issued in November 1977. The Basic Skills Test was first offered in school year 1977-78. As of 1981, the High School Proficiency Test will be offered as a graduation requirement in Grade 11. A date has not been set for the implementation of the diagnostic test for either Grade 4, 5 or 6.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The testing program has been developed by the state of Tennessee in accordance with a State Board of Education mandate. Memphis has also formulated its own Minimum Competency Policy as of August, 1977.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*No policy has been developed for bilingual students. As of now, they either take the test in English or are exempted if their English-speaking ability is severely limited.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Upon recommendation of a multi-disciplinary team, school systems may exempt handicapped students requiring special education. If a student desires to take the test, however, he/she must be permitted regardless of handicap. The test may be taken in braille, large print, or it may be interpreted if so desired.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*A district-wide specialist is provided by the state for in-service training. Local newspaper releases as well as a sample listing of items for objectives have been used to inform the public. The state produces training materials for teachers. Students receive a print out explaining their scores to bring home to their parents.*



Milwaukee

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Elfred Bloedel, Administrator  
City-Wide Testing Program  
Department of Educational Research and  
Program Assessment  
Milwaukee Public Schools  
Administration Bldg.  
PO Drawer 10K  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
(414) 475 - 8258*

2. The title of the testing program

*Test of Academic Skills (TASK)  
(published norm-referenced test)*

3. Producer of the test(s)

*Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Students take the TASK reading test as part of the city-wide testing program early in grade 10 . Those not reaching the required performance level are programmed into proficiency classes offered each semester and in summer school. Opportunities to re-take the proficiency test are provided at the close of each course. Students leaving school without graduating may also return to their high school to take the test in order to meet the graduation proficiency requirement.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*Purposes are to "add meaning" to the high school diploma and to help identify and remediate reading problems. Non-exempt student must "pass" the proficiency test in order to receive a diploma. Those not reaching the required level are identified for special proficiency classes. Students who have earned sufficient credits for graduation but have not met the proficiency requirement receive letters indicating their continued status as candidates for graduation.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Obtained raw scores are reported in relation to the required proficiency level and to the maximum possible score. The established cut-off requires performance in the average or high ranges based on grade 8 National norms for the proficiency test (stanines 4-9).*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The resolution requiring graduates to "pass an 8th grade reading proficiency test" was adopted in April 1977. It was first applied to the graduating class of June 1978.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The proficiency program was initiated by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Students are exempted who are newly-arrived foreign born and/or have difficulty understanding or speaking English.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*The following exceptional education students are exempted: Trainable mentally retarded, Educable mentally retarded, Learning disabled, Emotionally disabled, Visually handicapped, Deaf and hard-of-hearing. These students may volunteer to participate in the proficiency testing. Their participation does not alter their exempt status.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s)

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Teachers, counselors, and administrators participate in in-service sessions on measurement. Additional information is provided in regular written communications.*

*Prior to testing, students participate in orientation sessions which explain the purposes for testing, what is measured, how it is measured, and how results are reported. Follow-up individual and group conferences are used to explain reports of results and plan programs.*

*Parents and students receive reports in which test results are profiled and which provide explanations of the measures administered and the reporting statistics. Further personal inquiry with school personnel is invited.*



Minneapolis

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Dr. William C. Phillips, Director  
Curriculum and Student Services  
Minneapolis Public Schools  
807 N.E. Broadway  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413  
(612) 348-6076*

2. The title of the testing program

*Basic Mathematics Knowledge Test  
Senior High Assessment of Reading Proficiency (SHARP)  
Test of Every Day Writing and Skills (TEWS)  
Objective Reference Bank of Items and Tests (ORBIT)*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Basic Mathematics Knowledge Test - locally produced  
SHARP - produced by Los Angeles Unified School District  
TEWS - produced by the Huntington Beach School System  
ORBIT - McGraw Hill*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Basic Mathematics Knowledge Test - Mathematics  
SHARP - Reading  
TEWS - Writing  
ORBIT - Language Arts*

5. Grade(s) tested

*Basic Mathematics Knowledge Test - Grade 10  
SHARP - Grades 9 and 12  
TEWS - Grades 9 and 12  
ORBIT - Grade 8*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*All tests are used to identify weaknesses in specific skills areas. Students are offered remedial assistance but are not required to partake in remedial programs. Graduation and promotion are not determined by the tests.*

MINNEAPOLIS (cont.)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores

*Under development.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated

*The Basic Mathematics Knowledge Test was piloted during school year 1978-79. SHARPS, TEWS and ORBIT will be piloted during school year 1979-80.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program

*While both the City-Wide Advisory Committee and the North Area Teachers' Advisory have examined competency-based education, no basic skills program has been developed yet. The local school system has introduced the testing programs currently being piloted.*

10. Policy for bilingual students

*No policy has been developed for testing bilingual students.*

11. Policy for Special education students.

*Special needs students have had and probably will continue to have flexible testing requirements according to the decisions of the individual instructors.*

12. Any other students exempted for the test(s)

*No other students are exempted*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing

*"Profiles in Performance", a publication of the most recent test scores has been a major effort since 1972 to educate the media and the public in the field of testing. Teachers have assisted in developing the pilot tests.*

Nashville

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Thomas G. Caulkins  
Coordinator of Evaluation  
Metropolitan Public Schools  
2601 Bransford Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
(615) 259-5856

2. The title of the testing program

High School Proficiency Test  
Basic Skills Test, criterion referenced  
Diagnostic Tests

3. Producer of the test(s)

It has not been determined who will produce the High School Proficiency Test  
The State Department of Education has produced the Basic Skills Test with assistance from the Scholastic Testing Service  
Each local School system will develop diagnostic tests for either Grade 4, 5, or 6

4. Skill(s) tested

Mathematics and language arts (reading comprehension and vocabulary, grammar and spelling)

5. Grade(s) tested

The Basic Skills Test is currently offered to students in Grade 8. The High School Proficiency test will be offered to Grade 11 as of 1981. If a student does not pass the test in Grade 11, he/she will have two more opportunities to take the test before graduation. Diagnostic tests are also to be administered to either Grade 4, 5 or 6.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The Basic Skills Test is being used only for diagnostic purposes in Grade 8. When the High School Proficiency Test is offered in Grade 11, students must pass it in order to graduate. Nashville is doing a research study to correlate Grade 4, 5, 6, 7 achievement test scores with the Grade 8 Basic Skills Test in order to identify students who may have difficulty with Grade 8 test. Remedial assistance is offered to students who do not pass the test. A separate diagnostic test will be offered to either Grade 4, 5, or 6.

NASHVILLE (cont)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores

*70% of the items answered correctly in each subtest is the cut off score for passing the Basic Skills Test. No metric has been identified for the other tests.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated

*The initial State Board of Education mandate was issued in November 1977. The Basic Skills Test was first offered in school year 1977-78. As of 1981, the High School Proficiency Test will be offered as a graduation requirement in Grade 11. A date has not been set for the implementation of the diagnostic test for either Grade 4, 5 or 6.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program

*The testing program has been developed by the state of Tennessee in accordance with a State Board of Education mandate*

10. Policy for bilingual students

*No policy has been developed for bilingual students. As of now, they either take the test in English or are exempted if their English-speaking ability is severely limited.*

11. Policy for special education students

*Upon recommendation of a multi-disciplinary team, school systems may exempt handicapped students requiring special education. If a student desires to take the test, however, he/she must be permitted regardless of handicap. The test may be taken in braille, large print, or it may be interpreted if so desired*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s)

*No other students are exempted from the tests*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing

*A district wide specialist is provided by the state for in-service training. Local newspaper releases as well as a sample listing of items for objectives have been used to inform the public. The state produces training materials for teachers. Students receive a print out explaining their scores to bring home to their parents.*

New Orleans

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr, Ellen Pechman, Director  
Department of Research & Evaluation  
New Orleans Public Schools  
4100 Touro Street  
New Orleans, LA 70122  
(504) 288 6561

Objective-based testing, SCIP:  
Dr. Constance C. Dolese, Director  
Secondary Education  
New Orleans Public Schools  
4100 Touro Street  
New Orleans, LA 70122  
(504) 288 6561

2. The title of the testing program

Objective-based testing, a "management" system in basic skills developed in conjunction with SCIP (Secondary Curriculum Improvement Program). SCIP is not a test in itself, but a self-paced mastery program of which objective-based testing is only one aspect.

- Critical Skills Pilot Test
- Louisiana State Assessment Test

3. Producer of the test(s)

-The objective-based testing is locally developed with the assistance of a computer company which is programming the computerized management system. Other tests have been purchased from publishers and, as of yet, no single company has received the final contract for the objective-based tests.

-New Orleans is presently working with several publishers to customize a test to coincide with the stated objectives of the Critical Skills Pilot Test.

-The Louisiana State Assessment Test was designed by a test publishing company.

4. Skill(s) tested.

-The objective-based tests currently test reading and mathematics. Eventually the SCIP management system will be designed to test all objectives outlined in other major subject areas in the curricula.

- Critical Skills Pilot Tests - Reading and Mathematics
- Louisiana State Assessment Test- Reading and Mathematics

5. Grade(s) tested.

-The objective-based tests will be administered to all secondary students, grades 7-12.

-The Critical Skills Pilot Test is being piloted in grade 6 and may also be piloted in lower grades during school year 1979-80.

-The Louisiana State Assessment Test is mandated by law for all students in grades 4, 8 and 11.



6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*-The objective-based tests are used to assist the classroom teacher in assessing student progress on the locally defined minimum skills.*

*-The Critical Skills Pilot Test has been developed to explore the use of objective-based testing as the basis of promotion from the elementary school.*

*-The Louisiana State Assessment Test represents the evaluation of school pupil progress based on identified, basic statewide skills and concepts as defined by public school accountability legislation.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*-Objective-based tests - % correct, incorrect*

*-Critical Skills Pilot Test - % correct, incorrect*

*-Louisiana State Assessment Test - % correct, incorrect*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*-The SCIP management system was first implemented during the spring term, 1978, and will be used in fourteen pilot schools during the fall of 1979.*

*- The Critical Skills Pilot Test was pretested in eleven schools in May, 1978, and will be administered again in the fall, 1979, to those same eleven schools. In spring, 1980, the Critical Skills Pilot Test will be used as an indicator for promotion of students from grade 6 in the pilot schools. The Louisiana State Assessment Program was initiated in 1978.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*All system-wide testing was initiated as a result of the Orleans Parish School Board curriculum recommendations and was developed by various special study groups organized in 1977. These testing programs support and go beyond the minimum requirements established by a 1978 mandate from the State legislature.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*To date, no special tests have been developed for bilingual students. No formal policy has been developed regarding the testing of bilingual students. The needs of those individuals are accommodated at the classroom level.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*For the objective-based tests and the Critical Skills Pilot Tests, it is recommended that each special education student be treated according to determinations made by the educators responsible for designing their individual instructional programs. Up to 1978-79, no students have been exempted from the Louisiana State Assessment Tests.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*In-service training programs have been implemented for teachers in the past several years to develop greater understanding of how to use tests and to introduce teachers to the use of the innovative test programs. Parents have been involved in study groups which selected the tests and tested the objectives, and parent workshops have been held in various schools which provide information about testing.*



New York City

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Flora O'Neill-Costelloe, Administrator  
School Liaison Unit  
Office of Educational Evaluation  
New York City Public Schools  
110 Livingston Street, Room 743  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

2. The title of the testing program

Pupil Evaluation Program Tests (PEP)  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests  
Basic Competency Tests Reading, Writing and Mathematics  
Regents Competency Tests, Reading, Writing and Mathematics

3. Producer of the test(s).

All tests produced by New York Board of Regents, except the Basic Competency Tests produced by the State Education Department.

4. Skill(s) tested.

PEP-Reading and Mathematics  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests-Reading and Writing.  
Basic Competency Tests, Reading, Writing and Mathematics  
Regents Competency Tests, Reading, Writing and Mathematics  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations-in regents subject areas.

5. Grade(s) tested.

PEP Grades 3,6  
Regents Preliminary Competency Tests-Grades 8, 9  
Basic Competency Tests-Grade 9-12 (in transition RCT)  
Regents Competency Tests-Mathematics-Grade 9 or after completion of the required unit of mathematics. Reading and Writing- Grades 11 and/or 12.  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations-after completion of subjects covered by Regents Comprehensive Examinations.

6. Purpose of the test(s)

Except in a few cases (see#10-12), all students must pass either the Regents Competency Test, Basic Competency Test, or Regents Comprehensive Examinations in English and Mathematics in order to graduate. All tests are used to identify students for remedial assistance except the Regents Comprehensive Examinations which are used for indicating academic excellence.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

PEP-Statewide reference point in stanine terms.  
Preliminary Regents Competency Test-common degrees of reading power unit scales.  
Basic Competency Test- all standardized metrics  
Regents Competency Test-statewide reference point  
Regents Comprehensive Examinations-% passing scores.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

The regulations and procedures for the Regents Competency Testing Program were published in 1979. As of the class of 1982, the Basic Competency Test will be completely phased out and students will take either the Regents Competency Tests or the Regents Comprehensive Examinations as a graduation requirement. The PEP tests and Regents Preliminary Competency Tests are already being used. The Regents Competency Tests in reading, writing and mathematics are first being used for the class of 1981.

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

All of the tests are developed by the state and used on a state-wide basis.

10. Policy for bilingual students.

"Alternative testing techniques" are used for "pupils whose native language is other than English who first enter, after grade eight, schools where the predominant language of instruction is English.

11. Policy for special education students.

"Alternative testing techniques" are used for "pupils with handicapping conditions."

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

Students are exempted from a test requirement for graduation if they have scored above a certain level on College Entrance Examination Board tests or American College Testing Program tests. "Alternative tests" may be used for students "who have not passed the examinations...because of extraordinary administrative circumstances not caused by the willful act of the pupil or of a teacher or administrator."

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

Teachers are receiving in-service training. Literature explaining the testing program is being developed, will be disseminated through a district-wide committee composed of, among others, parents. The media has published a copy of a sample Regents Competency Test.

Norfolk

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. Anna G. Dodson  
Director of Research, Testing and Statistics  
Norfolk Public Schools  
800 E. City Hall Avenue  
Norfolk, VA 23501  
(804) 441 2319

2. The title of the testing program .

*Basic Learning Skills Test (BLS), criterion-referenced*  
*-Virginia Graduation Competency Test, norm and criterion referenced*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*-BLS Test-Virginia Department of Education, National Evaluation Systems, Inc., and two review committees.*  
*-Virginia Graduation Competency Test - Mathematics - Scholastic Testing Service, Reading - Instructional Objectives Exchange.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*-BLS Test - reading and mathematics*  
*-Virginia Graduation Competency Test-reading and mathematics*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*-BLS Test-Grades 1-3 during school year 1978-79. Grade 4 will be added during 1979-80 as will grades 5 and 6 if State funds are available.*  
*-Virginia Graduation competency Test-Grade 10 in the Fall, 1978 and Grade 9 in the Spring, 1979. If a student has not passed the test, he/she will have opportunities to take the test again during school year 1979-80 until passing. No competency testing of subsequent classes will be conducted during the school year 1979-80.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*The BLS Test is used to identify students in need of remedial assistance and to assist teachers in recognizing instructional needs. The Virginia Graduation Competency Test is used to identify students in need of remedial assistance. As of the class of 1981, students must pass the test in order to graduate.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*No metric is available for the BLS Test. The Virginia Graduation Competency Test is reported in %.*

NORFOLK (cont.)

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*Both testing programs have been developed in accordance with the legislature's 1978 Standards of Quality Statement. The BLS Tests for Grades 1-3 were first used during school year 1978-79. The Test for Grades 4, 5 will first be used in school year 1979-80. The Virginia Graduation Competency Test was first administered in school year 1978-79 but will not be a requirement for graduation until the class of 1981.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The BLS Testing Program and the Virginia Graduation Competency Test were both ordered by the Virginia State Legislature in a statement entitled "Standards of Quality for Public Schools in Virginia."*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Although there is no specific policy, exceptions have been made for bilingual students in some cases.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special provisions are made for special needs students.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s)

*Other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*The central office trains counselors and teachers who train students to interpret the scores. Literature has been prepared to explain the remedial process.*

Oakland

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Alma L. Williams, Acting Consultant  
Group Testing and Assessment  
Department of Research and Evaluation  
Oakland Unified School District  
1025 Second Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94606  
(415) 836 2622*

2. The title of the testing program

*High School Graduation Proficiency Test, criterion-referenced.*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Locally developed from CTN/McGraw's ORBIT, SHARP and TOPICS*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading Mathematics and Writing*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*During school year 1978-79, the test was administered to Grades 9 and 10. Next year the test will only be administered to Grade 9 and to those students who have not yet passed the test or sections of the test. The test will be offered approximately four times each year for students who do not pass the test or sections of it.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*The test is used to identify students in need of remedial assistance. As of the class of 1981, students must pass the test in order to graduate.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*70% of the items or 70% of the objectives correct for Reading and Mathematics. The writing test contains three parts-- a multiple choice language part and two writing samples. The student must pass two of the three parts in writing.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Oakland Board of Education adopted the minimum graduation standards objectives on May 30, 1978. The students were first tested in February, 1979. As of the class of 1981, students must pass the test in order to graduate. The entire program has been developed in response to California's AB 65, passed in 1977.*

OAKLAND (cont.)

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*Oakland developed the High School Graduation Proficiency Test in compliance with California's AB 65.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*AB 65 specified that all students must pass the proficiency examination in the English language before graduation. However, LES/NES students may take the test in their native language for diagnostic purposes. A version of the test will be translated into several languages for that purpose.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Proficiency standards for handicapped children are set individually in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*The community was involved in developing the objectives and policies for the High School Graduation Proficiency Test. Notifications of test scores are sent to parents and parent/teacher conferences are held.*



Philadelphia

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

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Assoc. Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Room 309, Administration Building  
Philadelphia Public Schools  
Pkwy at 21st St.,  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(215) 299 7767

2. The title of the testing program

-Functional Literacy Assessment  
-Assessment of Mathematics Literacy

3. Producer of the test(s).

Produced by the School District of Philadelphia

4. Skill(s) tested.

Survival skills - language and mathematics

5. Grade(s) tested.

Students are tested in Grade 10. If a student does not complete 70% of the items correctly in Grade 10, he/she will have as many opportunities as necessary to pass the test through Grade 12. Plans are almost complete for beginning the mathematics assessment in grade eight.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The Functional Literacy and Mathematics Assessments are used to assess general student achievement and acquisition of fundamental skills, to identify students in need of remedial assistance and to inform the public of student achievement. As of the Class of 1977, students must achieve at least a score of 70% in order to graduate.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

% items correct in five sections.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated

"The School District of Philadelphia in 1970 reaffirmed a commitment that all students graduating from our high schools will have acquired those basic competencies necessary to function in everyday life." The Functional Literacy Assessment was developed in 1975, piloted during school year 1976-77, and used as a graduation requirement for the Class of 1978. The Mathematics Assessment was first used as a graduation requirement for the class of 1978.



PHILADELPHIA (cont.)

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The School District of Philadelphia initiated the testing program.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Bilingual students are not exempted from the test at the request of the bilingual community.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special education students are exempted from the test.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Department heads train faculty. Literature is sent to parents.*

Pittsburgh

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Melvin Vesely  
Testing Specialist  
Pittsburgh Public Schools  
341 S. Bellefield Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
(412) 622 3931

2. The title of the testing program

*Basic Skills Assessment Tests, norm-referenced*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Educational Testing Service*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading and Mathematics*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Grade 11*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*A student who does not achieve a standard score of at least 134 must enroll in a Grade 12 remedial class. Beginning with the class of 1980, a student who fails the test must pass the remedial class in order to graduate.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Standard scores with norms for entry and exit from high school; each standard score is shown with a % of the norming sample scoring below the given score.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The Basic Skills Assessment Tests were first used in Spring, 1978. Beginning with the class of 1980 a student who fails the test must pass the remedial class in order to graduate.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The testing program was initiated by the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Pittsburgh did participate in the Pennsylvania Educational Quality Assessment Program when the program was mandatory, but did not participate when the program was voluntary.*

PITTSBURGH (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*There is no formal policy for bilingual students with respect to the Basic Skills Tests.*

11. Policy for Special education students.

*Special education students classified as Educable Mentally Retarded or other similar handicaps are exempted from the Basic Skills Assessment Tests.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Notice went home with report cards to parents. Teachers receive some in-service training. Teachers have been involved in developing curricula for remedial courses.*

Portland

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Walter Hathaway  
Evaluation Specialist  
Portland Public Schools  
501 N. Dixon St.  
Portland, OR 97227  
(503) 249 2000, X210*

2. The title of the testing program

*The Portland Achievement Levels Testing Program.*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*The Portland School District Evaluation Department, using the Northwest Evaluation Association's Item Banks.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading, Mathematics and Language Usage.*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Grades 3-9. Ninth graders who do not pass a test may take it again in later grades until they pass.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*The test results are used in Grades 3-8 to identify students for remedial assistance, to identify and group students (e.g. Title I, Gifted and Talented) and to evaluate programs. Beginning with Grade 9 the results are used to certify basic skills competencies as well.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*An extended Rasch based curriculum scale and a standard score scale. Indicators of mastery or nonmastery of individual goals and competencies are also reported. District and sub-district summary data are equated to scores on a nationally standardized test.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*Portland has been using the tests to assess competency in Reading and Mathematics since Fall 1977 and in Language since Fall 1978.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The Portland Achievement Levels Testing Program was initiated by the Portland school system in response to both State and local priorities. Although the State has identified broad areas in which local school systems must define competencies and certify students prior to graduation, the school systems are not required to test students for purposes of certification. Portland has chosen to do this in the basic skills areas.*

PORTLAND (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Since this a functional level program bilingual students with at least minimal English language functioning are tested. The tests are currently being translated into certain other languages. Waivers are issued in exceptional cases and a record of the waiver is placed in the student's file.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Mainstreamed special education students are tested in regular class where the handicap does not significantly impair ability to perform on the tests. Waivers are issued in exceptional cases and a record of the waiver is placed in the student's file.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*Waivers are issued in cases where the handicap does not permit useful data to be secured, and a record of the waiver is placed in the student's file.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*There is a Test Coordinator in each school. This is usually a teacher on extended responsibility. The Test Coordinator receives training sessions with a slide tape presentation, an orientation manual and a brochure. Principals also participate in at least one orientation session before each testing. Test Coordinators and Principals work together to orient building staffs, students and parents using the material provided. A score interpretation manual is also provided to teachers and parents. The school system uses the media periodically to publicize the testing program.*

St. Louis

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information

*Dr. Robert De Blaww, Director  
Research and Evaluation  
St. Louis Public Schools  
911 Locust Street  
St. Louis, Missouri 63101  
(314) 231-3720*

2. The title of the testing program

*BEST (Basic Essential Skills Test), criterion-referenced*

3. Producer of the test(s)

*BEST is produced by the state of Missouri*

4. Skill(s) tested

*Reading and Language Arts, Government and Economics, and Mathematics subtests*

5. Grade(s) tested

*Students are first tested in grade 8. If a student does not pass a subtest, she/he has an opportunity once each following year through grade 12 to retake it.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*Tests used to make overall evaluations of a student's competence in essential skill areas. Students receive remedial assistance. The tests are not used to determine graduation.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*Students must answer one out of three items under each objective correctly as well as achieve an overall score of 75%.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*BEST was piloted during school year 1977-78 and fully implemented in 1978-79*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*BEST was developed by the State in accordance with a State mandate.*



ST. LOUIS (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*There is no formal policy for bilingual students. Bilingual students are not exempted from the test.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special needs students are responsible for fulfilling the requirements of their Individualized Education Plans.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Limited training and literature is available for teachers and parents.*

San Francisco

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Zack Taylor, Teacher Specialist  
Curriculum Department  
San Francisco Unified School District  
2550 25th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94116  
(415) 731-6616*

2. The title of the testing program

*"Minimum Standards Program", criterion referenced  
"High School Proficiency Tests", criterion referenced*

3. Producer of the test(s).

*Tests are developed locally by teachers and curriculum specialists.*

4. Skill(s) tested.

*Reading, Writing and Mathematics*

5. Grade(s) tested.

*Minimum Standards Program-Grades 3,5,8, twice each year.  
High School Proficiency Tests, Grade 9. If a student does not pass the tests in grade 9, he/she may take the tests each following year through grade 12.*

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

*Students must pass the Minimum Standards Program or attend summer school in order to be promoted. A student who does not pass the High School Proficiency Tests in Grade 9 will receive remedial assistance and at least three additional opportunities to pass the tests. As of the class of 1981 a students who does not pass will not graduate.*

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*% correct to be determined in the fall, 1979.*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*The testing program was initiated in the elementary schools in school year 1977-78 and in the high schools in school year 1978-79. As of the class of 1981, a student must pass the High School Proficiency Tests in order to graduate.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The testing programs have been developed locally in compliance with California state law AB 65.*

SAN FRANCISCO (cont.)

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*In grades 3, 5 and 8 Limited English and non-English speaking children must take the Minimum Standards tests, unless the class room teacher feels it is inappropriate. The requirement to pass the tests for promotion is waived where it seems unfair.*

*No one is exempted from taking the High School Proficiency Tests. State law requires proficiency tests be taken and passed in the English language.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Students in Special Education Programs are required to take the Minimum Standards Tests and High school Proficiency Tests. Differential standards for passing are used in some cases.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*The teacher specialist for minimum standards meets with administrators (principals, vice principals, head counselors) once or twice annually. During the first year of the testing program, teachers received considerable in-service training. The need for in-service training was not so great during the second year. The community was involved in developing the testing program.*

Seattle

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Jane Soder, Evaluator  
Tests and Measurements  
Seattle School District No. 1  
815 Fourth Avenue N.  
Seattle, WA 98109  
(206) 587 4220

David Hoffman, Supervisor  
Tests and Measurements  
Seattle School District No. 1  
815 Fourth Avenue N.  
Seattle WA 98109  
(206) 587 4220

2. The title of the testing program

-Minimum Competencies Screening Test, criterion-referenced  
-Minimum Competencies Performance Test, criterion referenced

3. Producer of the test(s).

Both tests are locally developed.

4. Skill(s) tested.

-Minimum Competencies Screening Test-Reading, Mathematics and English  
-Minimum Competencies Performance Test-Applied skills in Reading, Mathematics and English.

5. Grade(s) tested.

-Minimum Competencies Screening Test-Grades 3,6,9  
-Minimum Competencies Performance Test-Grade 11 and additional times if failed.

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

-The Minimum Competencies Screening Test is used to identify students in need of remedial assistance.  
-As of the class of 1981, students must pass the Minimum Competencies Performance Test in order to graduate. If a student does not pass the test after receiving remedial assistance, he/she may take a competency class which, if passed, qualifies him/her for graduation.

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

Both tests are reported in raw score.

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

-The local school board ordered the implementation of the Minimum Competencies Screening Test in 1976.  
-The Minimum Competencies Performance Test will be used for the first time in grade 11 during school year 1979-80. As of the class of 1981, a student must pass the test in order to graduate.

SEATTLE (cont.)

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*The testing program was developed by the Seattle school system.*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*The Minimum Competencies Screening Test has been translated into different languages, but a student must pass the Minimum Competencies Performance Test in English in order to graduate as of the class of 1981.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special arrangements are made for certain special education students (i.e. the test is read out loud to blind students.) The parents and counselors of special education students decide whether the students should take the tests.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the tests.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*Teachers, administrators and counselors have received on-going training. Students receive a list of graduation requirements which mentions the Minimum Competencies Performance Test. Parents of the class of 1981 will probably receive information about the Minimum Competencies Performance Test before it is administered in the fall of 1979.*

Toledo

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

*Dr. Gerald Biernacki, Director  
Research, Development & Evaluation  
Toledo Public Schools  
Manhattan Blvd. and Elm Street  
Toledo, OH  
(419) 729 5111*

*Toledo has just piloted during school year 1978-79 the Basic Skills Assessment Test published by Addison-Wesley and distributed through Educational Testing Service in Grades 10 and 12. During 1979-80 the school system will be developing a comprehensive testing program to be implemented at a later date. As of now, there is no official Toledo or Ohio competency testing program.*



Washington, DC

1. The person responsible for the achievement testing program whom someone outside the school system would contact to obtain information.

Dr. James T. Guines  
Associate Superintendent  
Office of Instructional Program  
Development and Services  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
485 22th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 724 4173

Joan Brown  
Executive Director  
Division of Curriculum and  
Staff Development  
Competency-based Curriculum Center  
20th and Evarst St., NE  
Washington, DC 20018  
(202) 576 6580

J. Weldon Greene  
Office of Instructional Program  
Development and Services  
DC Public Schools  
415 12th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 724 4168

Robert Farr, Director  
Pupil Appraisal Branch  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
415 12th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 724 4165

2. The title of the testing

Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), utilizes norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests.

3. Producer of the test(s).

District of Columbia Public Schools with assistance from McGraw-Hill

4. Skill(s) tested.

Communication skills, consumer/producer skills, analytical skills, social and political skills, and self-actualization skills.

5. Grade(s) tested.

Grades K-12

6. Purpose(s) of the test(s)

The four major goals of the CBC according to Superintendent Reed are 1) To promote academic excellence for the attainment of knowledge, competencies, and skills. 2) To ensure the active participation of all components of the District of Columbia in the implementation of systemwide competency-based curriculum, 3) To develop a systematic plan for the continuous assessment and evaluation of educational needs and achievement and 4) To make significant improvements in the level of service and the efficiency of operations in the major support areas of management services and to maintain those levels of support services necessary to the mission of the school system."

WASHINGTON, DC (cont.)

7. Metric used in reporting test scores.

*-Norm-referenced achievement tests-Grade equivalents and percentile ranks  
-Criterion-referenced tests-Percentage of Mastery of Objectives*

8. Approximate date testing program was initiated.

*After the 1976-77 Year of Awareness to obtain commitment from all levels within the system for the CBC, the CBC was field tested in 1977-78 and implemented in 1978-79. By 1981, implementation throughout the entire system will be completed.*

9. Organization responsible for initiating the testing program.

*DC Board of Education*

10. Policy for bilingual students.

*Students who cannot understand English are exempted from the testing program.*

11. Policy for special education students.

*Special education students are exempted from the regular testing program.*

12. Any other students exempted from the test(s).

*No other students are exempted from the testing program.*

13. Training programs for parents, teachers, students and administrators to explain the uses of testing.

*The staff has received extensive in-service training. The community was involved in and informed about the development of the CBC. An Instructional Support Team has offered support to classroom teachers as well as prepared materials for the staff and the public and developed a CBC library. The CBC has been publicized by the media and education journals. The Pupil Appraisal Branch conducts workshops for teachers, counselors and administrators in test administration and test interpretation. "The Parents Guide to Understanding Tests" published by CTB McGraw-Hill is made available to parents through the local school.*



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Atlanta	Dr. Carole S. McCarson Research Associate Division of Research and Evaluation 210 Pryor Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30303 (404) 659-3381
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(503) 234-3392



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Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 724-4173

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY  
SCHOOLS

## ORGANIZATION

### PURPOSE

The Council of the Great City Schools is a non-profit educational organization representing twenty-eight of the largest urban school systems in the country. Membership is limited to urban public school systems which have enrollments of over 70,000 or are located in cities with populations of over 300,000 and urban characteristics. The Council's purpose is to promote the improvement of education in the Great City Schools through research, legislative advocacy and other appropriate activities. For over two decades, the Council has been in the vanguard of urban education, advocating the cause of urban school systems.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs and policies of the Council are governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Superintendent of Schools and one member of the Board of Education designated from each city. The Board of Directors convenes twice each year.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Between the semi-annual meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee is empowered to manage the affairs of the Council. The Committee consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, nine at-large members, and four standing committee chairpersons elected by the Board of Directors. The immediate Past President also serves on the Executive Committee.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

Four standing committees develop the processes critical to the effective functioning of the organization and advise the Executive Committee on Council affairs:

#### Needs Assessment and Program Development Committee

The responsibilities of this committee are: a) to identify and define the major issues and problems facing the urban schools; b) to promote research and study of those issues and problems; and c) to recommend programs and prepare proposals aimed at addressing and resolving the identified concerns.

#### Policy Formulation Committee

This committee has a two-fold mission: a) to review and evaluate past Council policies in light of current urban problems and b) to provide leadership and expertise for exploring urban issues, developing urban education policy options, and recommending specific policy changes impacting on urban schools.

#### Legislative Advocacy Committee

This committee seeks to mobilize the resources of member districts to work effectively with legislators and other policy-makers in the adoption and implementation of legislation favorable to the education of urban youth. It is most concerned with the issues of equality of educational opportunity, quality educational programs for city young people, the adequate funding of mandated programs, and equitable financing of urban school programs.

#### Communications Committee

The purpose of this committee is to improve the relationships and communication between Council members, the national education community, political leaders and the public.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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