

Assessment Overview

No single factor can determine everything about a student's performance. Looking at information from a variety of tests and assessment tools remains the best way for parents and teachers to determine how well individual students are learning. The staff of Vashon Island School District uses many different types of assessments and indicators to monitor the progress of students and to adjust instruction to meet the individual needs of learners.

Throughout the school year, staff members work individually and collaboratively to analyze results of classroom assessments, grade level assessments and district assessments. They also study and discuss other indicators for success such as students' attendance, discipline referrals and completion of assignments and projects.

Each fall the entire staff meets to analyze the results of the statewide assessment. Specifically, our goals for data analysis district-wide include:

- Enhanced understanding of WASL data toward student achievement (“cohort” analysis, strand data, distribution scores and individual scores)
- Increased awareness and connections between data and curriculum and instruction
- Improved/enhanced instruction towards measurable student learning outcomes
- Enhanced awareness of individual student strengths and weaknesses on assessments

Formal Assessments used within the District

Brigance

This test is a standardized assessment used as a screening tool for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) in mathematics for grades 1st through 5th. All students are assessed in the fall and those who receive services are re-assessed at the end of services, which is typically in the spring.

Gates-MacGinitie

This is an assessment used by the Title 1 program as a screening tool. It is administered to 3rd through 5th grades in the fall for screening and when able/necessary again in the spring. The Word Feature Spelling and IRI are also assessments used by Title for screen 1st and 2nd grade students.

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

This reading assessment is used as a formative assessment for progress monitoring both in the Title 1 program and Early Intervention program.

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT®)

These abilities tests are administered to all 3rd and 5th grade students in the spring of each school year as the first step in identifying students for Vashon Island School District's Accelerated Learning Program. To automatically qualify for the Accelerated Learning Program, students must score at the 95th percentile or higher on one or more of the following domains: quantitative (math), verbal, or non-verbal.

Freshman Math Placement

This placement exam is administered by the high school staff to all entering 9th graders for placement into high school math courses. Students may qualify for Honors Geometry, Algebra, Basic Algebra, or Pre-algebra. All students must take Part I. Students interested in qualifying for Honors Geometry must also take Part II. Initial testing takes place in March of their 8th grade year. Retesting takes place in August.

Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test

This exam is administered by the middle school staff to 8th graders in the spring who did not meet grade level reading expectations on the 7th grade WASL. The results from the test are used to help determine placement into Freshman English classes at the high school. Make up exams for eighth grade students (absent students and new enrollees) take place in June.

State Required Assessments

The state-level Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) requires students to select as well as create answers to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding in each of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). The subject area assessments are composed of multiple-choice and short-answer questions as well as more extended response questions, essays, and problem solving tasks. The WASL measures application of knowledge to problem solving tasks utilizing skills and concepts developed over several years. For example, the third grade WASL measures learning from kindergarten through third grade, the eighth grade WASL measures learning from kindergarten through eighth grade, etcetera. The assessment used by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to evaluate school and district performance improvements. Federal legislation referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires state testing in reading and mathematics for grades 3 through 8 and high school.

Required Test (not considered part of the WASL):

Second Grade: Oral reading assessment (running record)

WASL subjects tested at each grade level include:

Third grade: Reading and mathematics

Fourth grade: Reading, mathematics and writing

Fifth grade: Reading, mathematics and science

Sixth grade: Reading and mathematics

Seventh grade: Reading, mathematics and writing

Eighth grade: Reading, mathematics and science

Ninth grade: optional testing year—students may choose to take one or more of the subject tests required for high school graduation.

Tenth grade: Reading, mathematics, writing and science--Successful completion of the reading, writing, and mathematics assessments are required for graduation for the class of 2008 and beyond (however, alternatives for meeting this standard are available to those students not passing the math WASL). Reading, mathematics, writing and science assessments will become a statewide graduation requirement for the class of 2013.

Eleventh and twelfth grades: Students may retest in those areas that they did not meet the state standard.

Results from the 2007 WASL follow this narrative. While a single year's data can provide a quick analysis of successes and challenges in our district, studying the historical trends provides a clearer measure of the growth or lack of growth (i.e., the distribution of scores over time or "cohort" data).