



## West Virginia School Report Card, Student Results: An Information Brief for Parents

Today, school quality tends to be judged by how well students perform, because that is the standard set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The law says every school's students should do better each year until 2014, when all students should be able to reach "proficiency" (a high level of skill) in all subjects. The state accountability system is set up to measure how well both schools and students are doing toward meeting the proficiency goal.

This information brief looks at the section of the school report card that gives information about student performance results from statewide testing. A separate information brief looks at the sections that present information about school performance.

### Overview

West Virginia law and state department of education policy say that state, county, and school information should be available to parents and other community members. Data are collected and the information is presented in the format of "NCLB Report Cards."

**Reports on schools and school systems.** The state department of education prepares a report card for every school in West Virginia and makes these available on its Web site ([http://wvde.state.wv.us/data/report\\_cards](http://wvde.state.wv.us/data/report_cards)). The report card shows data for each individual school as it compares to the whole county and/or the whole state. An electronic copy is free—just go online—or you can order a print copy by phoning the state department of education at 304.957.9833, ext. 53328.

**Data sources.** Most of the information in the school reports comes from records that people in the schools and district offices keep. State and federal laws help school officials decide what data to collect. The data are entered into the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS), and the state department uses this system to analyze data and create reports.

**Subgroups.** You will notice that data in the report cards are sometimes listed according to subgroups. These are groups of students who have been defined by NCLB and are reported separately on purpose. Generally, these are students who may struggle with learning and, in the past, were averaged into the school's overall performance. Because of this, they were easy to "leave behind," something that separating the data helps to prevent.

**Understanding what data say.** Students learn new things every day, so the data in a report show how things were at one moment in time. When the report reaches you, your child or your child's school may be performing at a different level.



Some information can be hard to collect or hard to analyze. If the information that goes into a report is incomplete, the results of the data analysis will also be incomplete.

Comparing results from several years, a technique called longitudinal analysis, can help educators and parents understand trends. This works best when the same kind of information is collected each year; however, that is not always possible. For example, West Virginia changed its statewide test from a norm-referenced one to a criterion-referenced one during the 2003-2004 school year. Now, we can know whether students are doing better in math since 2004 because the same test has been used every year. We can't really compare today's results to 2003 results because the tests were different.

## Proficiency: How It's Measured and What It Means

When students are tested, whether in a classroom quiz or a statewide test, the results need to be sorted to see which students understand a topic and which students need more support to learn. Educators often use rubrics—tables that describe different levels of knowledge—to help them decide how well a student is doing. On the example shown on the next page, you see that West Virginia uses five levels of knowledge: (1) novice, or beginner; (2) partial mastery, for a student who begins to understand the topic; (3) mastery, for a student who has grade-level understanding and skills; (4) above mastery, for a student who achieves above grade level; and (5) distinguished, for a student who has a high level of skill and understanding.

This table starts with a **content standard**, a description of what students should know and be able to do in a topic area by the time they graduate from high school. The rubric is made up of **performance descriptors**, which say how students at a certain grade level might show how well they have learned the information in the standard. In this example, the grade level is kindergarten. The **objectives** are steps that build student knowledge on the way to mastery. Both performance descriptors and objectives become more difficult as students go up in grade level.

## Get More Information

For more information about West Virginia School Report Cards, go to the West Virginia Department of Education Web site: [http://wvde.state.wv.us/data/report\\_cards](http://wvde.state.wv.us/data/report_cards).

To find out more about the services we offer, contact West Virginia Parent Connections.

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## Example of Rubric Used in West Virginia (Grade: Kindergarten)

### Standard: 2 Civics/Government

- SS.S.K.02 Students will
- examine and analyze the purposes and basic principles of the United States government (Purposes of Government)
  - outline and evaluate and analyze the origins and meanings of the principles, ideals, and core democratic values expressed in the foundational documents of the United States government (Ideals of United States Democracy)
  - examine and distinguish the structure, function, and responsibilities of governments and the allocation of power at the local, state, and national levels (United States Government and Politics)
  - analyze how the world is organized politically and compare the role and relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs (United States Government and World Affairs)

### Performance Descriptors (SS.PD.K.2)

Distinguished	Above Mastery	Mastery	Partial Mastery	Novice
Kindergarten students performing at the distinguished level compare and contrast roles of authority figures. They apply the classroom rules to other situations. They explain the importance of traditional patriotic symbols and give examples.	Kindergarten students performing at the above mastery level categorize the roles of authority figures in their daily lives. They model behavior in accordance with the classroom rules they have developed. They discuss the importance of traditional patriotic symbols.	Kindergarten students performing at the mastery level give examples of authority figures and their roles in our daily lives. They explain the importance of rules and participate in developing rules. They identify traditional patriotic symbols and are given the opportunity to participate in patriotic activities.	Kindergarten students performing at the partial mastery level give examples of authority figures. They explain the importance of classroom rules. They match patriotic symbols with assistance.	Kindergarten students performing at the novice level identify authority figures and classroom rules. They identify patriotic symbols with assistance.

Objectives	Students will
SS.O.K.02.01	explain why rules are important and participate in developing rules
SS.O.K.02.02	give examples of authority figures in the home, school, and community, and recognize their roles in daily lives
SS.O.K.02.03	identify traditional patriotic symbols such as state and national flags and be given the opportunity to participate in patriotic activities such as standing for the National Anthem

## Glossary

**Criterion-referenced tests** compare the student's performance to a defined set of skills and knowledge.

**Norm-referenced tests** compare one student's performance to the performance of other students, usually a national sample.

**Subgroups** are groups of students defined by NCLB. They are (a) ethnic—White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American; (b) students with disabilities, sometimes called Special Ed on the report card; (c) economically disadvantaged—usually students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals—and called Low SES on the report card; (d) limited English proficient, or LEP; and (e) migrant.

**WESTEST**, or the West Virginia Educational Standards Test, is the criterion-referenced statewide test that students in grades 3-8 and 10 take every year to measure mastery of academic content. The test is designed to go with West Virginia's Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs), so students are being tested on the knowledge and skills they are learning in the classroom.

## The Statewide Testing Section of the Report Card

To achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) as measured by NCLB, a school must aim toward having all its students at proficiency by the year 2014. That means every student must reach the mastery level or better. So, in the West Virginia system, the percentage of students who have reached proficiency is determined by adding three rubric categories together. The equation looks like this: mastery + above mastery + distinguished = proficient. That's why the student results on the report card appear under six categories, not just the five that are in the rubrics. Proficient appears at the right side of the table, after the five rubric categories.

The state report card shows the results for a particular school as it compares to its county and to the state as a whole. In addition, student subgroups are broken out and appear below the totals for all students.

### Example of West Virginia Statewide Testing Report, Math Results by Subgroup

	Percent of Students Tested			Novice %			Below Mastery %			Mastery %			Above Mastery %			Distinguished %			Proficient %			
	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	Sch.	Dist.	State	
<b>Math</b>																						
All	100	100	99	9	9	5	18	22	19	44	47	46	26	23	22	6	8	8	77	78	75	
White	100	100	99	9	9	5	17	22	19	39	47	46	31	24	22	*	9	8	81	79	76	
Black	*	100	99	*	*	9	*	*	28	49	48	46	21	15	13	*	<5	<5	74	67	62	
Hisp.	*	*	98	*	*	7	*	*	21	*	43	48	*	*	18	*	*	6	*	77	72	
Asian	*	*	99	*	*	<5	*	*	8	*	20	29	*	32	29	*	40	32	*	92	91	
Indian	*	100	99	*	*	7	*	*	20	*	*	51	*	*	14	*	*	7	*	*	73	
Male	100	100	99	13	11	6	21	24	19	41	45	45	25	22	22	*	9	8	73	76	75	
Female	100	100	99	*	7	<5	14	21	19	48	48	47	27	23	22	*	8	7	81	79	76	
Low SES	100	100	99	12	12	8	21	26	25	47	48	47	25	19	16	*	<5	<5	75	71	67	
NON LowSES	100	100	99	*	<5	<5	*	15	13	*	44	45	*	28	27	*	13	12	88	86	84	
Spec.Ed	100	99	98	36	33	24	*	33	37	*	28	30	*	8	8	*	<5	<5	55	38	40	
NON Spec.Ed	100	100	99	*	<5	<5	16	19	16	46	49	49	27	25	24	7	9	9	80	84	82	
LEP	*	*	98	*	*	9	*	*	20	*	*	39	*	*	19	*	*	12	*	*	71	
Migrant	*	*	100	*	*	*	*	*	36	*	*	40	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	62	

This material was created in whole or in part by funds from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, under grant #U310A060257. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, any other agency of the U.S. government, or any other source.



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