

THE TRUTH ABOUT SB 1
The Myths about the Interim Period & the New State Assessment System

Myth #1 - "There is no accountability for the next three years."

The Truth

- Accountability does continue during the interim, with federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reports generated for federal and state purposes; requirements to close the achievement gap (Senate Bill 168, 2002 General Assembly); public reporting of all state-required assessments; and local accountability via district- and school-established expectations.
- The definition of PROFICIENCY for students remains the same.
- In the areas of reading and mathematics, the NCLB federal accountability continues with increasingly higher goals—each year the targets (percent of students at proficient and above) grow. The goal remains every child reaching proficiency in those subjects by 2014.
- Public reporting will continue in core areas of reading, math, science, social studies and on-demand writing. These scores will be presented using the "Percent of Students" format for the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished performance levels.

		% N	%A	%P	%D
Example:	Social Studies	10	25	45	20

So, in this case, 65% of students scored Proficient or better on the test.

- School districts, through their boards of education, may set expectations for staff and form local-based accountability systems during the interim period.
- Schools will NOT receive state accountability indices and growth charts, and academic indices will NOT be released by the state. The goal of schools to reach proficiency with an accountability index of 100 by 2014 is no longer used.

Myth #2 - "There is no more CATS testing, only NCLB testing."

The Truth

- There is one test. The Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) was used to report state (CATS) and federal (NCLB) results.
- In 2009, 2010 and 2011, students will continue to take the KCCT in reading, math, science, social studies and on-demand writing in the same grade levels. The test will be based on the current Core Content for Assessment and use the same design (multiple choice and open response questions) as previous years.
- In 2009, 2010 and 2011, there are no state administrations of arts & humanities (AH) or practical living/vocational studies (PLVS) assessments. In 2009, each district will receive a copy of the test for the AH and PLVS content areas and answer keys. These tests may be administered at local discretion outside the state testing window.
- The KCCT test schedule must be reduced to seven days in 2009 and six days in 2010 and 2011.
- A stand-alone norm-referenced assessment in reading and math will be added in grades 3-7 in 2010 and 2011, to be administered one week before or after the KCCT.
- There will be no writing portfolio state scoring or reporting of results.
- Again, districts have the authority to set their policies on assessments [KRS 160.345(3)(b)], and districts can implement a local accountability system based on specific content areas.

Myth #3 - "Writing, Arts & Humanities, and PL/VS are gone from accountability."

The Truth

- In 2009-10, work on program reviews to replace the assessments in these areas will begin.
- SB 1 charges school councils with development of instructional programs in each of these areas, consistent with district policy.
- Council policy on writing must include writing portfolios for each student. Portfolios are a part of the required criteria for the writing program reviews.
- Beginning in 2011-12, the results of these program reviews will be included in the new state accountability system.

Myth #4 - "You should just focus on reading and math until 2012."

The Truth

- It is important for district leadership to continue to set high expectations for best curricular and instructional practice and expect strong professional ethics.
- Kentucky's *Program of Studies* requires content beyond reading and mathematics.
- In the future, all subject matter will be included in the new state assessment system; a let-up in these subjects now may hurt a school in the long run.
- In 2009—2011, the KCCT will be administered based on the current Core Content for Assessment.
- Public results will be released for all tested content areas during the interim. Public reporting allows citizens and local communities to review district and school performance.

Myth #5 - "How will we set achievement gap targets without CATS?"

The Truth

- Individual student results will be reported for all state-required assessments.
- The language of KRS 158.649 (SB 168) remains the same in the interim. Achievement Gap Targets were set in February 2009. SB 1 prohibits the use of "academic" and "accountability" indices. If gap targets were written using these terms, it is recommended that they be rewritten using "percent proficient" terminology.
- Beginning in October of 2012, the reporting of achievement gap targets changes from a biennial requirement to an annual requirement. The requirement also is moved from the spring (February and April) to a single date (October). In addition, the requirement to report schools that have not met targets has gone from four years to two years.

Myth #6 - "The new assessment system in 2012 will be all norm-referenced testing."

The Truth

- The new assessment system will feature a single test with both criterion- (standards-) referenced items and norm-referenced items.
- The new assessment will feature both multiple choice and constructed response items.
- SB 1 contains, for the first time, a definition of "formative assessment" and its uses.
- The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), in conjunction with the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), will develop new content standards for the new assessment system that will begin in 2012.
- The new standards will be "Fewer, Higher and Clearer".
- Fewer standards will allow teachers to focus more attention on students who need additional assistance and also make it easier to advance those students who are progressing at a faster rate.