

Higher WKCE Expectations Adopted for Math and Reading

In the Howard-Suamico School District, and across the state of Wisconsin, we are working to ensure that our students are ready for further education and careers. Our state assessment has been changing to reflect this priority.

In the next couple of months, Wisconsin public schools will receive the results of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) that students in Grades 3 through 8 and 10 took this fall. This year, Wisconsin raised the WKCE scores needed for students to reach the basic, proficient, and advanced performance levels in reading and math. Because of these changes, WKCE results will show a significant decline in the number of students considered to be “proficient” or “advanced.” This does not reflect a change in the abilities of students, teachers, or schools. It only reflects the higher standards and aspirations we have for our students and schools.

Higher expectations have been established as a better measure of student progress toward college and career readiness.

The new college and career readiness proficiency levels are based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called the “Nation’s Report Card.” The adoption of NAEP performance standards is part of a statewide plan to continue to improve school performance, and part of a national movement to prepare all American high school graduates to compete in a global society.

The change affects WKCE results for reading and math. It does not affect other WKCE content areas, such as social studies, science, and language arts, or WAA-SwD scores, an alternative assessment taken by a small portion of Wisconsin students.

Wisconsin is on a rapid trajectory toward higher standards. This includes implementation of the Common Core State Standards, Wisconsin School Report Cards, upgraded curriculum standards for students with disabilities and English language learners, and improved, next-generation assessments. Raising the WKCE benchmarks is part of a strategic effort to ensure our children are ready for college and careers in today’s rapidly changing, global society and economy.

Adjusting to the higher aspirations and expectations will take some time, but this is a necessary change for a worthy purpose: to elevate the achievement of our students and their schools. Together, we can all work to make sure every child graduates ready for college and career.