



PLEASE RETURN TO NWPE ASAP!

Name & E Mail (optional; will be kept confidential)

School/District

Grade Level

2003 Survey on Education and Legislative Issues

Testing and accountability in education are important and necessary. The original intent of the WASL was to measure schools' success in teaching the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements. Some educators and parents have expressed concern, however, that it has become a high-stakes test to measure student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Some believe it should not be a graduation requirement. Research has shown that the WASL is neither a reliable nor valid test of student achievement.

According to the Washington School Research Center, while the WASL and ITBS measure some of the same skills, each provides unique information on student achievement at the elementary level. The moderate correlations between the WASL and ITBS also suggest that there is significant overlap between the instruments and that students (and therefore schools) who do well on one of the tests will tend to also do well on the other test. Each WASL costs \$27 to score. The ITBS costs a few dollars to score.

Please answer the following:

1. To what extent has WASL implementation affected classroom instruction?

- Improved to a great extent Improved to some extent
- Distracted to a great extent Distracted to some extent

2. Should individual students, their parents and their teachers be allowed to see the results of the WASL?

- Yes No Not sure

3. Are you concerned that the WASL has caused a narrowing of curriculum to students' detriment?

- Yes No Not sure

4. To what extent has the WASL caused a narrowing of curriculum?

- A great deal Moderate narrowing of curriculum
- Minor narrowing of curriculum None N/A

5. How has implementation of EALRs/WASL affected teacher authority to make routine decisions on classroom management and instructional methods?

- Improved to a great extent Improved to some extent
- Impeded to a great extent Impeded to some extent

6. Are you aware of ethical violations or incidents of unprofessional conduct due to WASL pressure?

- Numerous Some None

7. How should Washington State proceed with the WASL:

Progress is being made to implement world class standards. Continue to spend money and time revising, administering, and scoring the WASL as a requirement for high school graduation.

Continue to expend resources to revise, administer, and score the WASL as a measure of educational achievement, but eliminate it as a high school graduation requirement.

Use the WASL according to these suggestions: _____

Discontinue the WASL in favor of an effective but less costly student assessment and accountability system that includes multiple measures. These may include locally chosen assessment tools and standardized tests, such as the ITBS, NAEP as a sampling to determine program strengths, and the following additional ideas: _____

8. Since 1992 Washington State has spent over \$1 billion implementing a school reform system tied to the WASL. Do you believe this has been an efficient and effective use of state funds for raising student achievement?

- Yes Questionable No Not sure

9. Have working conditions for educators improved since the introduction of education restructuring in 1992?

- Greatly improved Somewhat improved
- Greatly deteriorated Somewhat deteriorated
- No change Not sure

10. Should the state continue to fully fund the teachers' Cost of Living Allowance and class size initiatives by whatever means necessary (cut services: _____, raise taxes _____)

- COLA: Yes Not sure No
- Class Size: Yes Not sure No

11. Do you support institution of a state income tax to provide a predictable and sustainable finance system for the schools?

Yes Not sure No

12. Do you support temporary tax increases and additional "sin" taxes to sustain the current level of state support for schools?

Yes Not sure No

13. Should the state authorize the establishment of charter public schools (SB5012) funded by enrollment and which must meet objective criteria (for example, higher test scores, higher graduation rates, higher college enrollment rates, etc.) in a performance contract with a school district or public university? Charter schools that do not attract students or that fail to achieve their performance targets lose all public funding. Each school must participate in state assessments (WASL & ITBS). State level funding is provided on a per student basis in the same amount as other public schools. They are exempt from all state laws and rules applicable to public schools except those related to health, safety and civil rights. Each new charter school will begin as a non-unionized public school. If teachers vote to unionize, they may choose whatever union they want, including a "local only" teachers' union. (See enclosed pro-con articles by NWPE members.)

Yes Not sure No

14. Should the State Board of Education be required to develop and implement a Financial Literacy Education Program to teach public school students the basic principles of earning, spending, saving, and investing (SB5456)?

Yes Not sure No

15. Should schools be required to provide specific instructions on how to teach the relationship of the Declaration of Independence to the state and federal constitutions? HB1194 specifies that local school boards must provide books that explain the "meaning and substance" of the Declaration of Independence and the federal and state constitutions. The bill also requires local school boards to display copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the United States Constitution, and the Washington state Constitution.

Yes Not sure No

16. Should the state increase certain 1st year teachers' salaries? SB5183 would provide 1st year certificated instructional staff specifically assigned to teach math or science, who graduated with at least a 3.5 grade point average, a \$5,000 bonus paid as follows: \$2,000 upon completion of the 1st year of teaching; \$1,000 for completing the 2nd year; \$1,000 for completing the 3rd year; and \$1,000 for completing the 4th year?

Yes Not sure No

17. Should the state allow flexible compensation packages, including performance-based pay and additional enhancements, to attract and retain high quality educators?

Yes Not sure No

18. A) Do you think the law permitting rehiring retirees which allows them to retain their retirement while collecting their regular pay is a good policy?

Yes Not sure No

B) Does the state need to do anything to ensure that competition exists for those jobs?

Yes Not sure No

19. Should the state clarify and districts enforce school employee anti-strike laws and prohibit the use of sick leave benefits, compensation, or health benefits for educational employees during a strike or work stoppage (SB5155 and SB5021)?

Yes Not sure No

20. Should unfunded state requirements on school districts be considered "not mandatory" and should penalties be prohibited from being imposed for failure to comply with an unfunded requirement on school districts (HB1043)?

Yes Not sure No

21. Please rank order the following educational issues: 1=high concern, 2=moderate concern, 3=low concern. (Write N/A if issue is not a concern.)

- Pay Benefits Class size
- Student discipline Classroom supplies
- Non-academic paperwork, activities, regulations
- Teacher authority to make routine classroom decisions for students
- Reliability of union support for all bargaining unit members
- Religious or political intolerance in schools
- Availability of quality teacher coursework
- High turnover of new teachers
- Teacher quality
- Other

22. List three things that would help you raise student achievement to state standards or do your job more effectively: _____

23. Optional: Have you considered joining NWPE?

Yes No

Reason for not joining: _____

Please use additional page to provide NWPE with feedback and ideas and to provide further comment on any question in this survey.