

THE STANDARD DEVIATION

October 2008



Washington Educational Research Association
University Place, WA

<http://www.wera-web.org>

Winter 2008 WERA/OSPI Assessment Conference By Nancy Arnold, Ed.D.

The 24th Annual Washington State Assessment Conference will be held December 4–5, 2008, at the Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel. The conference theme is Assessment Dynamics for Dynamic Learning. One definition of dynamics in the Webster's dictionary is "the motivating or driving forces in any field or system". Assessment in Washington has been a topic of conversation since the first school reform bill was introduced in the state legislature in 1993. Rick Stiggins challenged our thinking early on about testing and has driven our dialogue, research, and examination of assessment practices with students with his concepts of assessment *for* learning, as well as assessment *of* learning. Our knowledge and use of assessment continue to expand with research and innovation in areas such as classroom-based, benchmark, progress-monitoring, and dynamic interactive assessments. These assessments and their results can provide information about a student's response to intervention, as well as achievement.

This annual December assessment conference, sponsored by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Washington Educational Research Association, will stretch your thinking about assessments and dynamic learning for students in Washington. Keynoter Dr. W. James Popham will discuss transformative assessments which teachers can use to adjust instruction and which students can use to adjust their learning strategies. State Superintendent Dr. Terry Bergeson will focus on the status of education reform in Washington and Dr. Henry Levin will provide the economic rationale for why we must meet our students' learning needs now. Over 50 breakout sessions will feature useful information on a variety of topics, including math assessment updates, creating high quality rubrics, meeting state standards for high

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school graduation, converting rubric scores to grades, and end-of-course testing.

Pre-conference workshops will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, and they will provide extended opportunities to learn about assessment topics such as Strategies of Assessment *for* Learning, high school response to intervention reading models, embracing data resistance using data teams, making the Math Collection of Evidence work in your district, and updates on NCLB.

Free clock hours will be offered for the conference. Be sure to check the WERA website www.wera-web.org for conference and registration information. Send in your registration early to get the lowest conference rates!

–Nancy Arnold is co-chair of the 2008 Washington State Assessment Conference. She serves as WERA President.

Hotel Information: Make reservations at the Airport Hilton at \$169/day -- single or double. This rate is guaranteed until November 14 unless the WERA block fills prior to that time. Call the hotel directly at (206) 244-4800; use 1-800 HILTONS; or link from www.wera-web.org. Be sure to mention the WERA Conference to get this special rate.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES: Credit card registration is now online. Go to www.wera-web.org, find the Assessment Conference, and complete the registration process. You will not need to complete or mail this paper form. To register with purchase order or check, complete this registration form and include it with the purchase order or check submitted to WERA at the address below. Complete one form per registrant. There is no on-site registration.

Refund policy: 100% before Nov. 8; 50% Nov. 8-22. There will be no refunds after November 22.

WASHINGTON STATE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM December 3-5, 2008

Name _____ Job Title _____

Employer _____ Work Phone (____) _____ - _____

Address _____ City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ Fax _____ Preferred first name for nametag _____

CONFERENCE FEES: Use the appropriate column below based on your membership status. Circle the fees you are using. Non-members may join WERA for \$25 by paying membership dues now. Note that there are separate fees for the pre-conference and conference, and that fees increase over time. If you are coming to both, circle the two appropriate fees in the member or non-member column, depending on the time you are registering. *Full-time students not currently working* can join WERA for \$10 and attend for half the member rate with a recommendation from an active WERA member sponsor.

Circle the applicable amount(s)

Join WERA	Annual Membership dues	\$25			
MEMBERS with 2008-09 WERA dues paid:			NON-MEMBERS:		
Pre-conference (Wed.)	Before November 3	\$130 **	Pre-conference (Wed.)	Before November 3	\$155 **
	November 3 – 22	\$145 **		November 3 – 22	\$170 **
	After November 22	\$170 **		After November 22	\$195 **
Conference (Thur./Fri.)	Before November 3	\$220	Conference (Thur./Fri.)	Before November 3	\$250
	November 3 – 22	\$245		November 3 – 22	\$275
	After November 22	\$270		After November 22	\$300

Your total fee is the sum of the circled items. **ENTER TOTAL FEE HERE _____.** This should match the amount on your purchase order or check. Continental breakfast and lunch are included all days in conference fees.

** For the pre-conference, *pre-registration into specific sessions is required.* You may attend one session in the morning (1-5) and one in the afternoon (1 or 6-9). *Circle the sessions you will attend* if you are coming on Wednesday:

Morning #1 Seven Strategies #2 Math COE #3 Data Resistance #4 Assess/Psychometrics #5 H.S. Assessment System
Afternoon #1 Seven Strategies #6 Dynamics of NCLB #7 Math Stds./Curr./Assess. #8 Art Assessments #9 Network Meeting

Enclosed is my check. (# _____) or Attached is my Purchase Order. (# _____)

Special Needs: Check if you need vegetarian meals.

Return to: WERA Assessment Conference, P.O. Box 64489, University Place, WA 98464
 For more information, contact Leonard Winchell, 253-564-4816 or LenWWA@aol.com

To fax, send this completed registration page and your purchase order to 253-564-4816.

Wednesday, December 3 Optional Pre-Conference

The pre-conference program offers one all-day and seven half-day trainings, plus an assessment directors network meeting. You can attend the all-day session or choose one half-day workshop in the morning and one in the afternoon. Lunch is provided. ***Pre-registration for specific sessions is required*** (see form on next page). Continental breakfast and check in begin at 7:30 a.m. ***Morning workshops start at 8:30 a.m. Afternoon workshops start at 1:00 p.m. and end at 4:30 p.m.***

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

1. (A.M. & P.M.) **Seven Strategies of Assessment *for* Learning** (Jan Chappuis, ETS Assessment Training Institute)

*****All-day workshop***** This session will organize research-based recommendations about assessment practices into an instructional framework. Seven strategies are structured around three formative assessment questions: "Where am I going?"; "Where am I now?"; and "How can I close the gap?" We will explore effective practices. Specific topics include: Making learning targets clear to students; Providing descriptive feedback; Teaching students to self-assess and set goals; Engaging students in self-reflection, tracking, and sharing their learning—establishing protocols in the classroom. Materials and exercises will offer practical suggestions for incorporating assessment *for* learning into daily teaching and assessment.

2. (A.M.) **Making the Math COE Work in Your District** (Leigh Ann Mahaffie, Puyallup School District)

This session will look at a successful model for implementing the Mathematics Collection of Evidence. We will approach the process from the district, building, and classroom perspectives. Presenters from the Puyallup School District will discuss how systemic implementation leads to student success.

3. (A.M.) **Embracing Data Resistance** (Joe Belmonte, North Thurston Public Schools) At North Thurston all educators are part of a collaborative team that meets throughout the year. Spend a half-day with the Executive Director of Elementary Education and an Instructional Specialist to find out how we counter resistance with support. We will use the 'I do, we do, you do' approach; participants will view video of an actual data team, simulate a data team process and reflect on potential application for your district.

4. (A.M.) **What's New in Assessment and Psychometrics** (Yoonsun Lee and Joe Willhoft, OSPI)

This session will address current and relevant topics in assessment and psychometrics, such as vertical scaling. The presenters will include an update of plans for revising the Mathematics WASL in response to revised state standards and they will discuss implications for school district administrators.

5. (A.M.) **How to Set Up an Assessment System at the High School level: It Can be Done!** (Cheryl Young, OSPI) This session will provide educational leaders and lead teachers with tools to implement a structural assessment system under RTI to assess student needs and schedule intervention at the secondary level. Participants will identify and plan for a reading assessment system, identify student reading needs, and create a schedule for student placement. High school examples will be provided. Learner outcomes include identifying a reading assessment system within RTI; scheduling a reading assessment time-frame; and identifying student needs and student placement for reading intervention.

1. (A.M. & P.M.) **Seven Strategies of Assessment *for* Learning** (continuation from morning session)

If you are attending session 1 you will return to the same room after lunch. ***Do not register for other afternoon sessions.***

6. (P.M.) **Dynamics of NCLB** (Gayle Pauley and Bob Harmon, OSPI)

Participants will receive information on the current status of school and district accountability goals in the state of Washington in relationship to state assessments. 2008 AYP data will be reviewed and Title I school requirements will be

(Continued on next page)...

addressed. Current state plans to support school improvement and achievement, and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind will be covered.

7. (P.M.) Mathematics Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment on the Move (Lexie Domaradzki, OSPI)

This session will summarize the analysis of state standards that drove the changes for the WASL Mathematics assessments. Participants will examine the newly revised WASL Test and Item Specification Documents for grades 3–8 and High School based on Standards Adopted in 2008. These documents for grades 3–8 will determine changes in test content for WASL starting in 2010. High School changes will be discussed, including plans for implementation on the High School WASL in 2011.

8. (P.M.) Arts Classroom–Based Performance Assessments Demonstration–New/Revised Items in Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts (Ann Rene Joseph, OSPI) Arts Assessment Leadership Team trainers will showcase students to demonstrate new/revised Arts Classroom–Based Performance Assessments in dance, music, theatre and visual arts. Participants will be able to observe the student and teacher in the process of taking the CBPA. Participants, teacher and students will score the student on the appropriate classroom rubrics.

9. (P.M.) District Assessment Directors Network Meeting (Bob Silverman, Puyallup School District) This is a scheduled network meeting. This group plans its own agenda and conducts business and discussion under Bob’s leadership.

Conference Schedule

Thursday, December 4: Registration and continental breakfast from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

8:30: Keynote by **W. James Popham**. Jim Popham’s career has been mostly at UCLA. For many years he taught courses in instructional methods, evaluation, and measurement. He was recognized *by UCLA Today* as one of UCLA’s top 20 professors of the 20th century. He has authored 30 books, 200 journal articles, and numerous reports and papers presented before research societies. He is the founder of the UCLA Instructional Objectives Exchange (IOX), past president of AERA, and founded the quarterly AERA publication, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.

10:15–11:30: Breakout Session 1 11:30–12:30: Lunch (Student entertainment approximately 12:10)

12:30–1:30: Keynote by **Terry Bergeson**, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The address will focus on the status of education in Washington State.

1:45–4:30: Breakout Sessions 2 and 3

Friday, December 5: Registration and continental breakfast from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

8:30: Keynote by **Henry Levin**. Henry Levin is Professor of Economics and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He has authored books, been a professor at Stanford University, and worked as an economist at Brookings Institution in Washington DC. He has international affiliations with universities in Tel Aviv, Beijing, Barcelona, Mexico, and Hong Kong. He is a former president of the Evaluation Research Society, and editor of the *Review of Educational Research*. He has been a school board member in Palo Alto, CA., and is on the Board of Trustees of the Educational Testing Service.

10:15–11:30: Breakout Session 4 11:30–12:30: Lunch, including contest winner

12:45–2:00: Breakout Session 5 2:00: Conference concludes

For additional information: Leonard Winchell, WERA Executive Secretary, 253–564–4816. Email LenWWA@aol.com

President's Column



Another school year has begun and school district staffs are implementing instructional plans for their students. Their mission is to provide equal access to education and to promote high achievement for all students. School administrators, teachers, and parents examined test data,

conducted research and evaluated their programs from previous years in order to develop their plans for success.

The Washington Educational Research Association also makes plans for improvement each year. The WERA board goals for 2008–2009 are aimed at deepening the understanding and application of assessment, research and evaluation to the educational community at large through:

- promoting academic discourse at conferences, seminars, and through publications;
- sharing a variety of perspectives and voices on current issues in education; and
- increasing the dissemination of research which may influence educational policy regarding instruction, assessment, evaluation, and future research.

In the May 2008 issue of the *Standard Deviation*, I provided some examples of ways that WERA promotes collegial conversations about our educational practice. The WERA board continues to seek ways to encourage academic discourse during and through our conferences and events. We have entertained several ideas to increase opportunities for discussing our practice, such as networking lunches at conferences, creating stronger connections with higher education folks, and promoting partnerships with other research organizations.

I would like to describe the board efforts to represent a variety of perspectives at WERA venues and events. The WERA conference planning committees make a conscious effort to select keynoters and presenters of diverse viewpoints. The conference themes and session strands are designed not only to appeal to professional learning for a broad audience of educators, but also to spotlight important issues in the field of education, such as equity of school funding and equal access to instruction. One WERA annual activity at the spring conference that promotes differing views is the Pete Dodson Symposium where panel members debate a current educational issue through a series of questions posed by a moderator.

The WERA Board also solicits nominations from our diverse membership to serve on the board. Our membership includes state educational agency staff, school district administrators, teachers and school board members, university staff, college students, researchers, and educational service providers in several western states. We currently have the offices of president–elect and two at–large positions coming up for election in early 2009. The slate of nominees will be presented at the WERA/OSPI Winter Conference in December.

The WERA Board will seek feedback from its membership through online conference evaluations this fall to improve our conferences and assessment, research and evaluation services in the educational community. Please take the time to share your thoughts with the WERA Board; we value your opinions.

In my final column as WERA president, I will summarize our ongoing board plans and current goal to strengthen the dissemination of research. Be sure to check out the January 2009 issue of *The Standard Deviation* for interesting research, articles, and more!

–Nancy Arnold, Ed.D. is Director of Special Programs for Puyallup School District and WERA President. She was previously a special education assessment specialist with OSPI.

The mission of the Washington Education Association is to improve the professional practice of educators engaged in instruction, assessment, evaluation, and research.



WERA Services

- WERA provides professional development through conferences, publications, and seminars.
- WERA provides forums to explore thoughtful approaches and a variety of views and issues in education.
- WERA provides consultation and advice to influence educational policy regarding instruction, assessment, evaluation, and research.

WERA Membership Application

WASHINGTON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (September 1 through August 31 annually)

This application is: NEW or RENEWAL

Name _____ Preferred First Name _____

Job Title _____ Employer _____

Work Address _____

 City State Zip Work Phone FAX

E-mail address (Important for periodic information mailings) _____

Mark here if you are your district's assessment coordinator.

MEMBERSHIP TYPE AND DUES (Mark one.)

- Individual, \$25
- Organizational, \$100 (Includes up to 5 voting members. Please complete top portion for each.)
- Student, \$10 (Must have WERA member as sponsor.)
- Emeritus, free (Must have been approved by WERA Board.)

PAYMENT METHOD (Mark and complete the one you are using.)

- My check number _____ in the amount of _____ is enclosed.
- Purchase order number _____ in the amount of _____ is attached.

Important for Credit Card users: An online system for joining WERA via credit card (Visa or Master Card) is now available. You are encouraged to use this procedure. To do this, go to the WERA Web site at: www.wera-web.org. Then click on "Membership" inside the blue banner on the left side of the home page, and follow the instructions for joining WERA via credit card. **You should not complete this paper form.** Credit card payments will not be accepted using this paper form, and must now be processed online.

To use a check or purchase order, return this completed form with your check or purchase order to: WERA Executive Secretary, PO Box 64489, University Place, WA 98464.

For information contact Leonard Winchell, Executive Secretary, (253) 564-4816 or LenWWA@aol.com.

Call for 2009 Grant Applications

The Washington Educational Research Association (WERA) sponsors competitive grants (maximum award of \$5,000) for studies of educational issues. Studies lasting up to 18 months may be proposed. The 2008–2009 WERA budget allocates a total of \$5,000 for the 2009 awards. The purpose of the awards is to support studies that focus on instructional improvement, classroom assessment, educational measurement at both the district and state level, and the evaluation of education programs. Research and evaluation proposals focusing on issues associated with school reform that include partnerships with school districts are encouraged. Complete grant guidelines may be found on the WERA website at <http://www.wera-web.org/pages/awards/grants.php>.

Call for Nominations for 2009 WERA Awards

WERA recognizes contributions to educational research with five awards that may be given at the spring 2009 conference. ***Members are encouraged to make nominations for the awards.*** Self-nominations are accepted. Complete information on these awards may be found on the WERA website at http://www.wera-web.org/pages/awards/award_winners.php.

WERA Outstanding Dissertation Award

Purpose: To recognize exemplary dissertation research by doctoral students related to improving K–12 or higher education. **Eligibility:** Candidates must have successfully defended their dissertation and been awarded a doctorate degree by an accredited Washington state institution in the calendar year in which the application is due.

WERA Research Award

This award is given to an individual, group, association, or agency for outstanding educational research. Research should have state-wide application in terms of results, methodology, or analyses. Research should have long-term value.

WERA Product Award

This award recognizes outstanding professional products related to testing, assessment, program evaluation, policy research, instructional research, school or district profiles, instructional evaluation, test, or evaluation reporting. Products should be of high technical quality, original, of broad interest, and of long-term value.

Gordon B. Ensign Award

This award is presented to a person or institution that has demonstrated and exemplified outstanding contributions to the education of students in Washington State in keeping with WERA's mission.

Art Maser Service Award

This award is presented to a WERA member (or institution, education service association or organization) who has demonstrated and exemplified outstanding service to WERA and who has made a significant contribution to the field of educational research.

Test Directors Network Update –A WERA Affiliate

The WERA Test Directors Network will meet Wednesday, December 3rd, 2008 at the Seattle Hilton Airport Hotel. The agenda will include an hour with OSPI Asst. Superintendent Joe Willhoft, review of the Spring member survey findings and discussion of issues around math assessment, communications and AYP. Members are invited to bring a “I figured this out...” paper to share.

Inquiries to convener Bob Silverman at Puyallup Schools. Contact him at SilverRJ@Puyallup.k12.wa.us

Future Calendar

WERA Items

- 2008 State Assessment Conference, December 3–5, 2008
Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel
- 2009 Spring Assessment Conference, March 25–27, 2009
Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel
- 2009 State Assessment Conference, December 9–11, 2009
Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel

Contact: <http://Wera-web.org>

Other Calendar Items (Non-WERA)

- American Evaluation Association Annual Conference, Denver, CO
November 5–8, 2008
- WSASCD Annual Conference, Spokane, WA
November 6–8, 2008
- Creating Active Readers: Applying Research-Based Comprehension Strategies in Grades 2–8 (WSASCD), Betz Elementary School, Cheney, WA
January 10, 2009
- American Educational Research Association, National Council on Measurement in Education, National Association of Test Directors, Directors of Research and Evaluation Annual Meetings and Conferences, San Diego, CA
April 13–17, 2009

OSPI Conferences Contact:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Conferences/default.aspx>



Websites of Interest to Measurement Folks: Election Session

<http://uscountvotes.org>

An advocacy site devoted to accuracy in polling and fairness in elections. Their National Election Data Archive has about 2 dozen statisticians on its discussion mail list. Some of these statisticians have agreed to publicly commit themselves to the National Election Data Archive.

http://www.scientificmarketing.net/SMA/A_polling_primer.htm

This primer on election polling illustrates the danger of predicting public opinion, and voter action, days or weeks after the sample is gathered.

<http://www.notrain-nogain.org/train/Res/Num/how.asp>

The relationship of sampling to the Central Limit Theorem is explained in this piece on how polling works.

<http://www.realclearpolitics.com/>

Real Clear features timely poll averaging and an electoral map with a link to each polls and information about who paid for them.

<http://www.fairvotemn.org/resources/tools/fvgerry.html>

The art of Gerrymandering, a favorite lesson in my 1957 government class, is explained with a Minnesota challenge.

<http://www.pollingreport.com/sampling.htm>

The myth and reality of reporting sampling error are explored by the 1998 chairman of Lewis Harris and Associates.

http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_snapshots_20060621

Interested in the growing gap between worker and CEO pay?

<http://www.antiwar.com/casualties>

<http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/warstats.htm#Recurring>

One website is an anti-war data source on casualties in Iraq. The other details mega-deaths across the 20th Century from myriad conflicts with a refreshing skepticism about the veracity of mortality counts.

Reflections on School and District Improvement Planning

By Sue Shannon, Ed.D.

What is the “difference in power” between school versus district improvement planning? I don't have an answer in spite of reviewing a number of reports and sending inquiries to several researchers and other experts. I found no quantitative studies or statistical analyses addressing the question. So what do we know?

School and district improvement processes are multi-faceted endeavors. Isolating features of the work and holding things still long enough to conduct “gold” standard quantitative research are difficult. However, we know a great deal about school improvement, and we are steadily learning more about district efforts. Publications by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction on the nine characteristics of high-performing schools (Shannon & Bylsma, 2007) and the characteristics of improved school districts (Shannon & Bylsma, 2004) summarize a broad base of research. Many published studies tell the stories of successful schools (e.g., Abbott, Stroh, & Baker, 2005; Brinson, Kowal, & Hassel, 2008; Chenoweth, 2007). An increasing number of studies report on school districts (e.g., Dailey, Fleischman, Gil, Holtman, O'Day, & Vosmer, 2005; Marsh, Kerr, Ikemoto, Darilek, Suttorp, Zimmer, & Barney, 2005; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2003; Muller, 2004). We have some understanding about how the levels work together to improve school organizations and student learning. The effectiveness of school districts often is reported in terms of their roles in fostering school improvement. We also know that leadership at both levels has significant influence on improvement efforts. Leadership is treated in a large body of research that is outside the scope of this article.

Rather than frame the argument as school versus district improvement, many studies suggest that effective improvement depends on system-wide approaches involving both levels, often simultaneously. A symbiotic relationship exists between the levels in a system in which schools are nested in districts and districts in state and federal contexts. Each level of the system impacts school improvement and student achievement, either directly or indirectly. For more than thirty years the focus has been on school-based improvement, which grew out of the effective schools research and, more recently, supported by comprehensive school improvement initiatives. A focus on schools as the unit of change

resulted in many exemplary schools, but this approach also had the potential for creating “winners and losers” in districts (Payzant, 2005). The focus in recent years is shifting to districts as the point of entry for improvement. The literature offers several reasons for the shift: system efficiencies, increased coherence and oversight to improve fidelity of implementation of reform strategies, sustainability, and the need for expanded or “scaled up” reform to ensure equity and excellence for all students (Snipes, Doolittle, & Herlihy, 2002; McLaughlin & Talbot, 2003; Kerins, Hanes, & Perlman, 2007).

In a symbiotic relationship, school boards and districts create the culture and conditions to initiate and sustain successful school improvement. To do so, they focus unrelentingly on improved student learning, increase coherence in the system by aligning policies, programs, and practices to that goal, and implement accountability measures with flexibility. Districts, thus, provide direction and support to schools. Schools function within that context with the simultaneous pressure and support of the district (Billings & Dunworth, in press; David, Shields, Humphrey, & Young, 2001; Rothman, 2005). The challenge in improvement efforts is to determine areas of responsibility and control or “authority and discretion” (David, et al., 2001, p. iii) in ways that do not stifle school initiative. Some studies suggest that centralized control of instruction and operations should balance “local autonomy with clear accountability” (Ouchi, Cooper, & Segal, 2003, p. 5) so that schools own their reform strategies and can effectively serve their unique student populations.

Ouchi, Cooper, Segal, DeRoche, Brown, and Galvin (2003) examined the degree to which several school systems were centralized in decision making and operations and their relative effectiveness. They found that the most effective organizational structure was a hybrid, rather than highly centralized or loosely connected. They describe the hybrid as “multidivisional organizations,” in which the district performs some centralized functions and decentralized others giving some autonomy to the school while providing policy guidance and broad accountability (p. 9). According to

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the study, districts that used a hybrid approach outperformed more centralized districts on student performance outcomes, administrative efficiency, and incidence of corruption" (p. 2).

Although districts remain largely centralized (Ouchi, Cooper, & Segal, 2003), some districts are differentiating their support and accountability processes (Grogan, 2004) to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for schools depending upon need. While districts retain considerable control, and make the decision whether to relinquish any, some give certain schools considerable latitude in determining their instructional focus and organizational structure. In recent years, for example, Boston Public Schools and New York City schools decentralized their systems to a degree by creating and managing a "portfolio" of schools to personalize education, increase student achievement, and provide choices to students and families. Schools in the Boston Pilot High Schools and schools in New York City's Empowerment Schools, formerly the Autonomy Zone pilot, are freed from many of their respective districts' mandates and rules and given authority and discretion over such operational and instructional decisions as budget, staffing, curriculum, governance, and schedule. Both districts report that schools in these pilots outperform other schools according to various measures (Tung & Ouimette, 2007; Nadelstern, n.d.).

States are required to establish a "system of intensive and sustained support and improvement for districts and schools" under No Child Left Behind (Rhim, Hassel, & Redding, 2007, p. 22). *The Handbook on Statewide Systems of Support* (Redding & Walberg, 2007) describes research and practice as currently implemented across states. States take different approaches; for example, they may provide assistance directly to schools, support networks of schools with similar needs, or build the capacity of districts to support schools. A profile of Washington state's school and district improvement assistance programs, contained in the handbook, summarizes information from an on-site visit to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), telephone interviews of superintendents, their designees, and school principals, as well as documentation. The OSPI school and district improvement staff emphasize that "improvement efforts should be school-based but district supported" (Kerins, Hanes, & Perlman, 2007, p. 105). In the review, the OSPI staff stated that a key

lesson related to educational reform is the "critical role of the local superintendent, central office, and school board." Although considerable progress has been made by focusing on the school as the unit of change, staff turnover "can negatively impact the sustainability of gains over time" (p. 102–103) leading to a need for greater focus on districts. Thus, to provide "success at scale," the staff concluded state efforts "must focus on building the capacity of districts to support their schools" (p. 107).

In conclusion, school and district improvement planning are complex activities. Isolating and studying specific components is difficult. The literature suggests that simultaneous effort at both the school and district level has the potential for improving the learning of all students. This article has offered some examples of the symbiotic relationship of schools and districts in a nested system and strategies that hold promise for improving student learning.

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- Sue Shannon, is recently retired from OSPI where she served many years as a Senior Researcher. sshannon@scattercreek.com

Consultants, Contractors –Speak Up

We are preparing an article for the next issue about working with contractors. This will include a list of WERA members who provide consulting/contracting services to schools, school districts, and ESD's in Washington. If you would like to be identified in the article, please send an e-mail to Paul Stern, sternpo@wsu.edu with the following information:

Company Name

Principal

Names of individuals who are WERA members in your organization

Primary e-mail address

Primary phone number

Description of services offered

-Paul Stern, is Senior Research Associate with the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at Washington State University/Vancouver. He was recently elected to a WERA Board Member-at-large position.

Another Accountability System is Coming By Pete Bylsma, Ed.D.

You don't like AYP? Well soon another system will be in place that will be more valid and include lots of "carrots."

For the past seven years, the AYP rules set forth in NCLB have been used as the main component of the state's accountability system. However, feedback from across the state (and nation) reveals a lack of confidence in the validity and fairness of AYP results for accountability purposes. It has also produced some undesirable side effects, such as teaching to the "bubble kids" who are close to meeting standard and a narrowing of the curriculum.

The state legislature requires the State Board of Education to develop a statewide accountability system to identify schools and districts for recognition and further support. The Board is now developing an accountability index to sort schools and districts into different "tiers" based on multiple measures. It will likely approve the new system at its November 5-6 meeting. (This article describes the elements of that index as of mid-September, so they are subject to change.)

The proposed index is based on how schools and districts perform on a set of five outcomes and four indicators. The five outcomes are the WASL results in four subjects (reading, writing, mathematics, science) in all tested grades and the "extended" graduation rate for high schools and districts. These five outcomes are examined using four indicators (1) achievement, (2) achievement compared to similar schools, i.e. their "peers" by controlling for levels of ELL, special education, socioeconomic status, and mobility, (3) improvement, and (4) achievement of students from low-income families. The results of the 20 measures form a matrix shown in table 1.

Table 1
Accountability Matrix

INDICATORS	OUTCOMES				
	Reading	Writing	Math	Science	Grad Rate
Achievement					
Ach. vs. peers					
Improvement					
Ach. of low-income					

Each of the cells of the matrix would be ratings on a 5-point scale based on a set of fixed criteria. All subjects have the same set of benchmarks, and the assessment results are the aggregate totals for all the tested grades (results are not given by grade bands). Districts and schools would have the same rating system.

For example, below are the proposed ratings for each of the assessments. They apply to both the Achievement and Low income achievement cells and are measured in terms of the combined percentage of students meeting standard in a school and district in each content area:

- 86-100% 4
- 70-85.9% 3
- 55-69.9% 2
- 40-54.9% 1
- < 40%..... 0

With fixed criteria, schools and districts know what they need to do to get better ratings. Given state results thus far, ratings in reading and writing will be higher than in math and science.

The "improvement" and "achievement compared to peers" indicators would be measured in terms of the Learning Index, not just those meeting standard. This helps keep focus on all students across the achievement spectrum. There is much "upside" potential for improvement in both science and math.

The accountability index (not to be confused with the Learning Index) is the simple average of all 20 ratings. The index ranges from 0.0 to 4.0 (the higher the index, the better the level of overall performance). Table 2 on the next page, shows how the tier assignments would be determined based on the index score.

(Continued on next page)...

Table 2
Tier Ranges and Suggested Names

Tier	Index Range
Exemplary	3.00 - 4.00
Good	2.00 - 2.99
Adequate	1.00 - 1.99
Struggling	0.00 - 0.99
Priority (eligible for Innovation Zone) ¹	0.00 - 0.99

¹ *Those in this tier would be determined after an in-depth analysis of their data and local conditions.*

The proposed system would be more inclusive than the federal system. Not only would it include both writing and science, but it would use a smaller minimum number for reporting (10 students across the entire school/district) and be based on results of all students, regardless of how long they have attended school. It would not include unexcused absences or participation rates. Subgroup results would only be used when looking at schools and districts in the “struggling” tier to determine which should be assigned to the Priority tier and be eligible for further state support.

The same matrix would be used to recognize schools and districts for “distinction.” As of this writing, recognition would be given based on results in each of the 20 cells of the matrix when a 2-year average was at least 3.0. In addition, recognition would be given when the average rating for each outcome and indicator and the overall index reached 2.75 (see table below). Thus, there would be 30 possible areas for recognition, and a school or district could receive recognition in many areas.

Table 3
Proposed Minimum Criteria for Recognition

Indicator	Reading	Writing	Math	Science	Grad Rate	Avg
Achievement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75
Ach. vs. peers	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75
Improvement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75
Low-inc. ach.	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75
Average	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75

Note: Any cell with a 2-year average rating of 3.50 or above would be recognized “with honor.”

Many details will need to be worked out in terms of how the proposed system relate to the current system. This includes how the proposed recognition relates to the awards given by OSPI, what forms of assistance would be provided to those in the lowest tiers, and whether schools and districts would be required to participate in some form of state intervention if they were continually identified as being in the Priority tier. At the moment, schools that are in a “step” of improvement are not required to participate in any state assistance program.

Another unknown is how AYP results would be used. The preferred option is to have the state system replace the current method for measuring AYP but still compute the AYP results as in the past. Under this option, the AYP results generated using federal rules would only be used when identifying schools for the Priority tier once the initial index is calculated. If the U.S. Education Department does not allow this option and requires the current NCLB rules to compute AYP results, the two systems would co-exist with each other, with the state system driving state assistance and getting more attention than the federal system. Other states have a “single accountability system” as required by NCLB that includes both a federal and state component.

For more details and current information on the proposed system, see the State Board’s Web site at <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/> and click on the link to Key Initiatives and then “A system of accountability.” Information about the proposed system will be provided at sessions at upcoming conferences.

–Pete Bylsma is an independent consultant working for the State Board of Education as it develops the new state accountability system.

Book Review: Common Formative Assessments: How to Connect Standards-Based Instruction and Assessments by Larry Ainsworth and Donald Viegut Reviewed by Phil Dommès, Ph.D.

Abstract

The topic of formative assessment has become both popular and timely. Partially, this new focus reflects the efforts of schools and districts to provide the diagnostic information and progress monitoring lacking in state tests. This focus also reflects a growing consensus that formative assessment performs a major role in improving student achievement. Last month I reviewed [Transformative Assessment](#) by Jim Popham. Dr. Popham will be one of the speakers at the December WERA conference. You can access his review at ([WERA-web](#)). This month's reviews include two fairly recent books dealing, at least in part, with formative assessment.

Ainsworth and Viegut have written a useful introduction to common formative assessments. According to the authors, these are assessments that grade-level or departmental teams collaboratively select, design, and administer in order to improve learning for current students. Solidly grounded in practice, their book strikes a successful balance between clarifying the language of formative assessment and defining a process for implementing them in a school or district. Focusing primarily on common formative assessments, the authors also recommend intentional alignment among school-based assessments, district benchmark assessments, and state assessments. This alignment promises "predictive value" from each level of assessment to the next.

Writing common formative assessments includes the following key steps:

- 1) Translate state standards into a set of prioritized or "power" standards (the most important skills and knowledge for students' continued success in school and life).
- 2) Break down or "unwrap" the power standards into their key skills and concepts.
- 3) Determine the "big ideas" or the main understandings teachers will help students discover during the learning.
- 4) Write essential questions to help guide instruction and lead students to the big ideas.
- 5) Select or write pre- and post-assessments that reflect an appropriate mixture of selected response items and constructed response items to adequately measure students' grasp of the unwrapped skills and concepts.

Beyond detailing these steps, the authors describe a plan for collaborative scoring and analysis of assessment results. Their plan for collaboration, building on Schmoker's instructional improvement work, incorporates the use of data teams, a structured variation of the professional learning community.

Data teams meet periodically to review the results of common formative assessments, using a consistent series of steps: 1) chart the data; 2) analyze strengths and weaknesses; 3) set goals; 4) choose instructional strategies; 5) determine results indicators.

All in all, Ainsworth and Viegut provide a winning combination of solid assessment theory, sensible structures for implementing a system-wide assessment system, and practical suggestions for navigating the process.

Publication data: *Common Formative Assessments: How to Connect Standards-Based Instruction and Assessment*, by Larry Ainsworth and Donald Viegut, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, California, Paperback, 164 pages, \$28.75, (US) ISBN 978-1-4129-1577-9

–Phil Dommès is the Director of Assessment and Gifted Programs for the North Thurston Public Schools

Book Review: The Art and Science of Teaching by Robert J. Marzano Reviewed by Troy Oliver

Robert J. Marzano's most recent work, *The Art and Science of Teaching*, is a rich confluence of his previous work in three areas: 1.) use of effective instructional strategies, 2.) use of effective management strategies, and 3.) effective classroom curriculum design. Each of these important components of classroom instruction has been the focus of his recent publications.

The Art of Science of Teaching brings these together in a cohesive manner and incorporates the Art of Teaching in chapters devoted to developing effective relationships with students, a topic often left out of the discussion of effective teaching.

Each chapter provides rich examples of effective instructional practice, and provides a well designed blueprint for the novice to experienced instructors alike.

The book is dense with charts, graphs, rubrics and organizers that prompt the reader to examine and improve their instructional practice.

The Art and Science of Teaching is a quick read at 191 pages, and is a must for any educator serious about examining and improving their own practice.

Publication Data: *The Art and Science of Teaching*, by Robert J. Marzano, 2007. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA. Paperback, 191 pages, \$26.95 (US) ISBN: 9781416605713

-Troy Oliver is Executive Director of Secondary Education for the North Thurston Public Schools

Three Slots Open for the WERA Board

WERA is now accepting nominations for three positions on the Board of Directors: two at-large positions and the President Elect. All board positions are for three years.

Board members help plan and oversee WERA's activities and policies. They are expected to attend 3 regular board meetings held at the Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel, a 2½-day retreat in May, and a brief meeting before each of the two conferences. At-large members lead one functional area (e.g., professional development, communications, grants and awards). Those serving in the President's role help plan the conferences and oversee WERA's operations during their second year. Leonard Winchell, the Executive Secretary, oversees the day-to-day operations of the organization.

To nominate a person (including yourself) or for more information, please contact Jim Leffler at NWREL at lefflerj@nwrel.org or 503-275-9549. **Nominations are due to Jim by October 31, 2008.**

The board will review the nominees and present a slate of candidates at the December conference. When preparing the slate, the board takes into consideration the geography, gender, and positions held by the potential candidates to ensure a diverse set of perspectives. Elections will take place in February, and the winners will be announced at the Spring conference.

WASL Growth: How to Get Started

By Don Schmitz

In the spring of 2008 I discussed issues in exploring WASL growth. Below is a primer on getting started in your school. If you are comfortable with using Access and Excel and follow directions precisely, you can create a single cohort database that contains all the following growth calculations in well under an hour. This assumes you have WASL files that have complete State Student Identification codes (SSID) without duplication. It will take additional time to insure that fields are in the same order for all cohorts since you will be combining the cohorts into a master database.

Begin with a single cohort group with two successive years of WASL scores. This group is created from the Query download files. For this example I will use WASLDataGrd3Yr2007 and WASLDataGrd4Yr2008. The grade 3 results will be referred to as the pretest and grade 4 as the post test. I will not address any issues with comparing growth scores of different grade levels at this time as this was discussed in the "Exploring Issues in WASL Growth" article (Spring 2008, *TSD*).

The first step is to download the secure WASL files from Query in the OSPI Educational Data System (EDS) into Excel files. Be sure that reading and math scale score and test type fields are displayed. Then import the files into Access and shorten the names to "WASL07 gr3" and "WASL08 gr4". The cohort is made up of students who took both a WASL reading and WASL math test.

In Access, create a query that links the files on the SSID in a one-to-one relationship. Set a filter on "ReadingScaleScore" and "MathScaleScore" to "is not null" to eliminate any students who did not take both tests. Then set a filter on "ReadingTestType" and "MathTestType" to "Like WASL*" to eliminate students who took different forms of the test such WASL Portfolio (PORT). When you run the query you will have a cohort with pre and post test scores. Save the query and name it "class of 2016 WASL08".

In the design view you will want to add 2 additional columns that calculate the difference between the pre and post test. The syntax looks like this for reading difference scores:

```
"4-3RDiff: [WASL08 gr4.ReadingScaleScore]-
[WASL07 gr3.ReadingScaleScore]"
```

This exact formula will calculate the difference between the third and fourth grade WASL reading scale score if you named the files as directed above and did not change the field names from the Query file names. Repeat the procedure for math difference scores:

```
"4-3MDiff: [WASL08 gr4.MathScaleScore]-[WASL07
gr3.MathScaleScore]"
```

You have just completed a cohort group and may select which fields from your databases to be displayed. Table 1 displays a sampling of fields selected from grade 4. Field names are derived from the Query files with WASL08 gr4 added by Access. These names will be shortened at a later

Table 1.

Sample of grade 4 fields from the grade 3 - 4 cohort.

WASL08 gr4.SchoolName
WASL08 gr4.LastName
WASL08 gr4.FirstName
WASL08 gr4.SSID
WASL08 gr4.DistrictStudentCode
Gender
EthnicityId
BilingualESL
GiftedHighlyCapable
WASL08 gr4.IsSpecialEd
TitleMigrant
WASL08 gr4.ContinuouslyEnrollSchool
WASL08 gr4.ContinuouslyEnrollDistrict
WASL08 gr4.ReadingTestType
WASL08 gr4.ReadingAttempted
ReadingScaleScore
WASL08 gr4.ReadingStudentLevel
WASL08 gr4.ReadingMetStandard
WASL08 gr4.ReadingTeacherName
4-3RDiff
4-3MDiff

(Continued on next page)...

At this point you can analyze the results utilizing Excel, Access, SPSS or most any statistics program. You can use the following fields to make comparisons on "RDiff08" and "MDiff08". Excel pivot table work well for a quick analysis. Access reports can also be used to replicate and confirm results.

Table 2.
Fields available for pivots to make comparisons.

WASL08 gr4.SchoolName
Gender
EthnicityId
BilingualESL
GiftedHighlyCapable
WASL08 gr4.IsSpecialEd
TitleIMigrant
WASL08 gr4.ContinuouslyEnrollSchool
WASL08 gr4.ContinuouslyEnrollDistrict

In analyzing comparison groups, it is important to stay within a single grade level since the WASL is a different test at each grade level and the State means and standard deviations vary from year to year. If you wish to make comparisons across grade levels you will need to add additional calculated fields. The first step would be to calculate difference scores adjusted for State means. This requires subtracting the difference between the State means from 3rd to 4th grade from each students score in your cohort. Table 3 displays State means (E. Yap (OSPI personal communication, August 26, 2008) :

Table 3.
State WASL means by grade level.

Reading WASL:		
grade	2007	2008
3	411.72	411.43
4	411.03	410.74
5	411.18	413.5
6	408.09	407.73
7	406.77	404.44
8	407.81	406.32
10	426.44	423.91

Table 3 continued
State WASL means by grade level.

Math WASL:		
grade	2007	2008
3	413.15	411.32
4	406.5	402.66
5	407.1	407.01
6	398.65	396.84
7	402.49	398.28
8	399.96	400.86
10	400.03	394.12

Table 3 is rearranged and calculated to demonstrate the mean differences between grade levels for the State. Only scores from grades 3 through 8 are used to maintain consistency of comparing scores from successive grade levels. The grade column is displayed to represent the formula, grade 4 minus grade 3 (4-3):

Table 4.
Mean Differences of State WASL scores, 2008 - 2007

				07-08	
Reading		08 gr.	2008	cohort diff	grades
07 gr.	2007	3	411.43		
3	411.72	4	410.74	-0.98	4-3
4	411.03	5	413.5	2.47	5-4
5	411.18	6	407.73	-3.45	6-5
6	408.09	7	404.44	-3.65	7-6
7	406.77	8	406.32	-0.45	8-7
8	407.81				
		10	423.91		
10	426.44				
Math		08 gr.	2008		
07 gr.	2007	3	411.32		
3	413.15	4	402.66	-10.49	4-3
4	406.5	5	407.01	0.51	5-4
5	407.1	6	396.84	-10.26	6-5
6	398.65	7	398.28	-0.37	7-6
7	402.49	8	400.86	-1.63	8-7
8	399.96				
		10	394.12		
10	400.03				

In this example, statewide scores on average decreased 0.98 points in reading from grade 3 in 2007 to grade 4 in 2008 and 10.49 points in math. Therefore, the next

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calculated fields to add to our Access database for reading scores adjusted by the state mean are: "4-3RDiffWA: [4-3RDiff]-0.98" and for math: "4-3MDiffWA: [4-3MDiff]-10.49".

Normalized Comparisons

You may also utilize z scores to normalize the scores for each grade level so that cross grade comparisons may be made. Z scores utilize the state means and standard deviations as discussed in the Exploring WASL Growth Scores article (Spring 2008, *TSD*).

Table 5.
State 2007 and 2008 WASL means and standard deviations.
2008 State data

Reporting Grade	Reading Mean	Reading STD	Math Mean	Math STD
3	411.43	31.19	411.32	36.83
4	410.74	23.57	402.66	42.00
5	413.50	26.56	407.01	38.12
6	407.73	22.85	396.84	36.05
7	404.44	24.12	398.28	45.11
8	406.32	25.88	400.86	42.95
10	423.91	31.81	394.12	41.54

2007 State data

Reporting Grade	Reading Mean	Reading STD	Math Mean	Math STD
3	411.72	29.62	413.15	36.28
4	411.03	20.08	406.5	40.82
5	411.18	22.76	407.1	37.61
6	408.09	21.34	398.65	36.26
7	406.77	21.82	402.49	42.93
8	407.81	24.99	399.96	41.39
10	426.44	28.57	400.03	37.89

In this case, the following fields would be added to the Access database for reading and math by copying and pasting these formulas into new columns:

Rz07: ([wasl07 gr3.readingscalescore]-411.72)/29.62
Rz08: ([wasl08 gr4.readingscalescore]-410.74)/23.57
Rz08-z07: [Rz08]-[Rz07]

Mz07: ([wasl07 gr3.mathscalescore]-413.15)/36.28
Mz08: ([wasl08 gr4.mathscalescore]-402.66)/42.0
Mz08-z07: [Mz08]-[Mz07]

Although z scores are less readily understood, they are statistically more appropriate scores to use in comparing results from different tests with substantially similar populations. It is beneficial to make all of the above calculations to help users of the information better understand WASL growth scores.

If you follow the above procedures you will have an Access database for each cohort (grades 3-4, grades 4-5, grades 5-6, grades 6-7 and grade 7-8). It is important to add a field identifying the cohort by graduation year as in: "GradYr: 2016". **It is also important to keep the same number of fields in the same order for each cohort.** Each cohort should be named after the graduation year of the class it represents as in, "class of 2016 WASL08". These databases named after the graduation year can be combined with a Union Query in Access written in SQL such as:

```
SELECT * FROM [class of 2016 WASL08]
UNION
SELECT * FROM [class of 2015 WASL08]
UNION
SELECT * FROM [class of 2014 WASL08]
UNION
SELECT * FROM [class of 2013 WASL08]
UNION
SELECT * FROM [class of 2012 WASL08];
```

After combining the databases with the Union Query, export the database into Excel and change the field names to generic names that fit all the data by eliminating references to grade levels, adding fields identifying the cohort (i.e. "testgr08") and shortening names for efficiency in analysis as seen in Table 6. (Table on following page...)

Table 6.
Field names abbreviated for convenience

GradYr
schyr
testgr08
testgr07
SchCode
SchName08
SchName07
StudentID
Cohort fname
Cohort lname
Gender
Ethn
SpEd
ELL
Gifted
CESchool
CEDistrict
08RdgLvl
08RdgScore
08MthLvl
08MthScore
08RdgMet
08MthMet
08RdgTT
08MthTT
07RdgLvl
07RdgScore
07MthLvl
07MthScore
07RdgMet
07MthMet
07RdgTT
07MthTT
06RdgLvl
06RdgScore
06MthLvl
06MthScore
06RdgMet
06MthMet
06RdgTT
06MthTT
RDiff08
MDiff08
RDiffWA08
MDiffWA08
RDiff07
MDiff07

MDiffWA07
Rz06
Rz07
Rz08
Rz07-z06
Rz08-z07
Mz06
Mz07
Mz08
Mz07-z06
Mz08-z07
Reading TeacherName
Writing TeacherName
Math TeacherName
ScienceTeacherName

Now you have a master database ripe for harvesting mounds of data. Excel pivot tables are an excellent tool for analysis and comparison. Alternately, this master database (with the new “generic” field names) can be imported into Access as a new table in order to use Access Query or Reports for analysis. Access Reports is a good way to verify Excel pivot tables. Importing the Excel file into SPSS gives another tool for statistical analysis.

-Don Schmitz is the Director of Assessment and Program Evaluation for the Mukilteo Schools. This is his second article on analysis of WASL data using growth scores. SchmitzDJ@Mukilteo.wednet.edu

Analyzing Surveys Using SPSS

By Linda L. Elman, Ph.D.

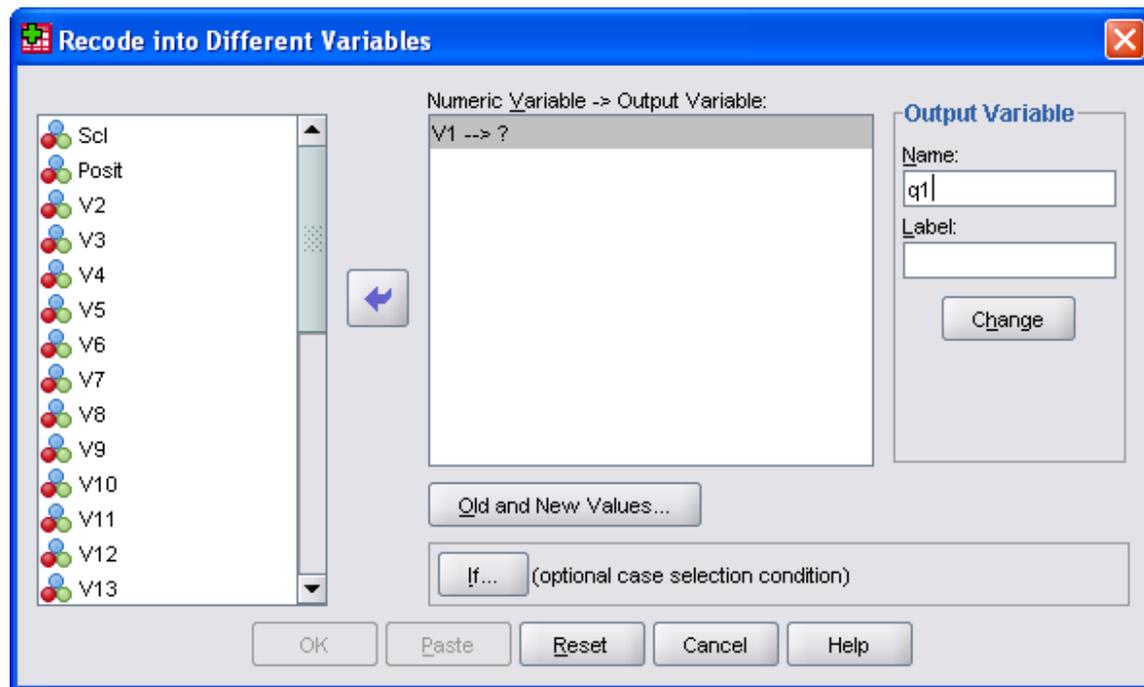
Do you frequently collect survey data through the Internet, on scannable forms or through hand input of the data? I do, and I find SPSS a wonderful tool to use.

The data can come in any form—responses might be A–E with “A” representing strongly agree, in numeric form 1 = strongly agree, or perhaps 5 = strongly agree.

However it comes, I generally want to ensure that the highest number (e.g., 5, or 4 depending on the scale) represents the most positive response, and 1 represents the most negative response. (I have found it very difficult to explain why “lower is better.”)

With apologies to my mathematics colleagues, I do assume that my data form an equal interval scale—that is, the difference between “Strongly agree” and “Agree” is the same as the difference between “Neutral” and “Disagree”.

If my data are in numeric form, with 5=Strongly agree, and 1=Strongly disagree, I’m ready to go. If they are in the reverse order, I convert them. There are multiple ways to do this. Assume I have 10 questions, and I have conveniently labeled them v1, v2, v3, ..., v10. I can, using the menus, recode them one by one into a new variable, q1, q2, q3, ..., q10. To do this I would use **Transform, Recode into Different Variable**, click on v1 in the variable list, and then in the box marked output variable type q1, then click on the **change** button.

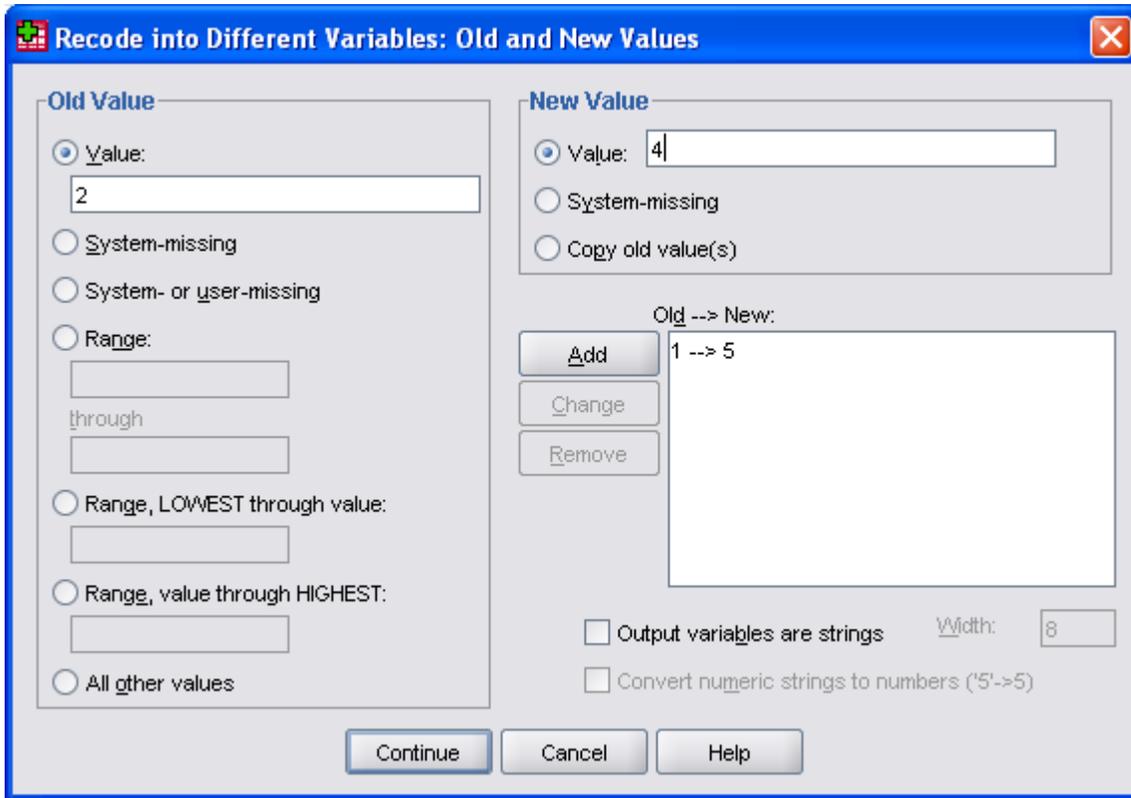


You can continue to enter v2 and q2, repeating the process for all 10 variables.

Next, click on the “Old and New Values” button. You can enter 1 under old value, 5 under new value, and then click add. Continue with each of the values you want to recode—2 goes to 4, 3 to 3, 4 to 2 and 5 to one. You will now have two sets of variables, v1 to v10 where 1=‘Strongly agree’ and 5=“Strongly disagree”, and a second set, the q’s with 1=Strongly disagree, and 5=Strongly agree.

(Continued on next page)...

You can then calculate means and standard deviations for each of the q variables with the higher the mean the more positive the response. You can also compute frequencies for each of the variables to get the number and percent of 1's, 2's, 3's, etc. for each item.



Supposing your responses come in text format and you want to convert them to numeric values. You can use a similar process. You would type the text response, for instance that corresponds to a 5 into the Old value box on the left, and the numeric value you want to convert it to in the new value box. Then click **Add**. Don't hit **Continue** until you have input all of the values you want to convert. Be sure to check the box (under **Output variables are strings**) **Convert numeric strings to number** to ensure that your new variables are numeric. You can then continue your analyses the same way.

You might also try syntax to do the same things. Select **File, New, Syntax**. In your new syntax file you can type your recode statements one at a time.

Recode v1 (5=1)(4=2)(3=3)(2=4)(1=5)into q1.

Recode v2 (5=1)(4=2)(3=3)(2=4)(1=5)into q2.

Notice that each line of codes ends with a period.

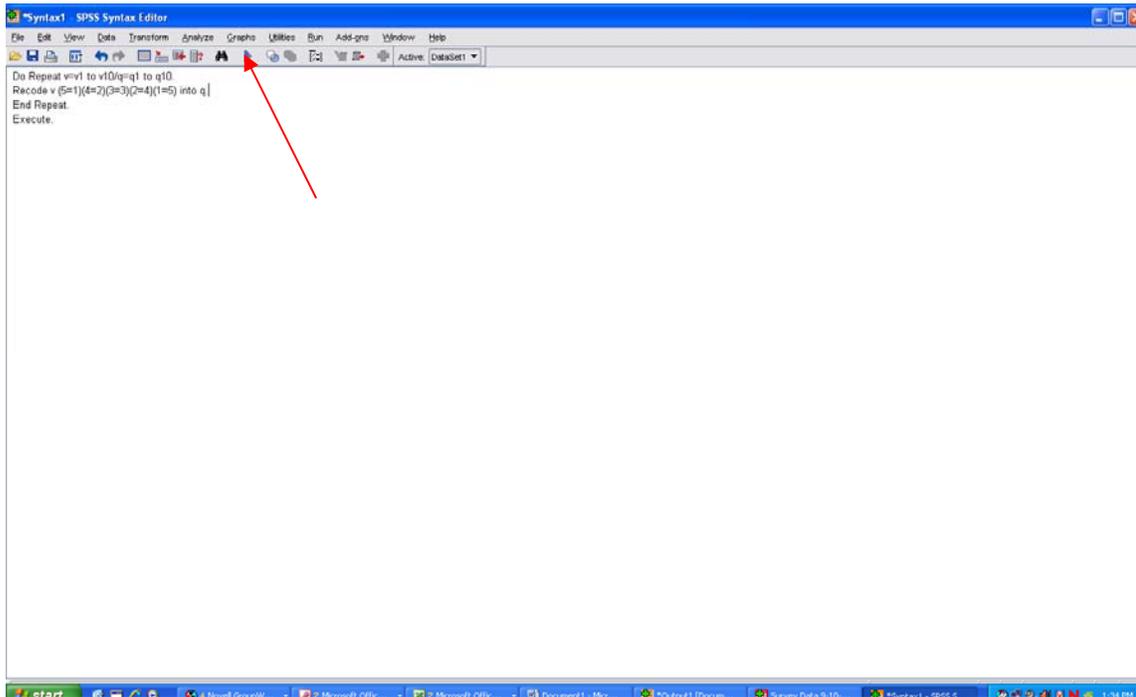
Or, you could use one of the syntax "tricks" in SPSS.

You could use the **Do Repeat** function. **Do Repeat** says I am going to have you do the same function over and over to the variables I identify.

The syntax for our 10 variables would be as noted in the screen shot following.

(Continued on next page)...

To run syntax you highlight the text you want to run, and click the right arrow head and your syntax will run.



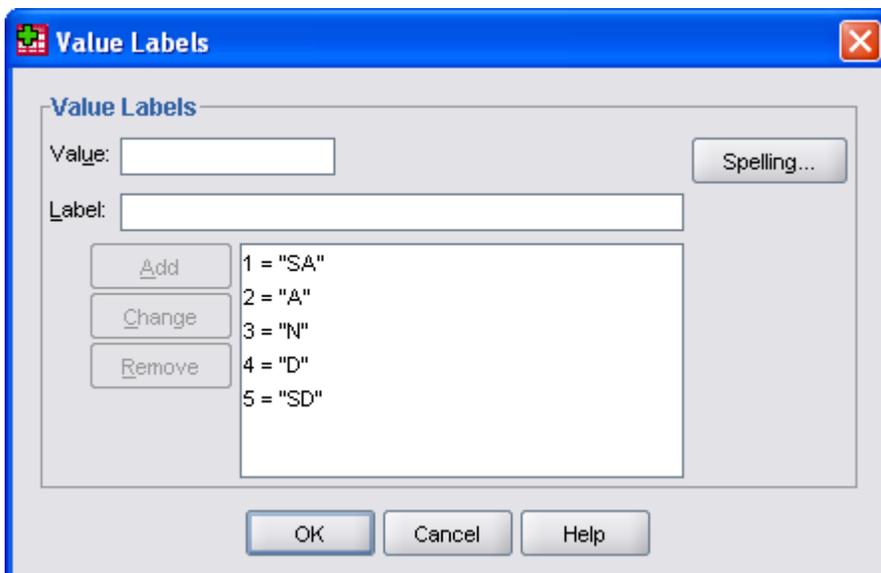
If the data are numeric, but 1 is high and 5 is low, you can use a compute statement and recode the variables.

Do Repeat v=v1 to v10/q=q1 to q10.

Compute q=6-v.

End Repeat.

Once you're done recoding, it is really handy to go back to your data set, click on the variable view and label the variable values. In this case I labeled my first set of variables with 1='SA' 2='A', etc. I would similarly label my q sets of variables with 1='SD', 2 = 'D', etc. Once you label one variable in a set and click OK, you can copy and paste the labels to all of the variables in that set.



-Linda L. Elman is the new Director of Research and Development for Tukwila School District. She served in Central Kitsap School District for many years.

Now you are ready to analyze your data.

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