

Table II

Testing Programs

States rely more heavily on their own tests for minimum competency programs than is true for state assessment programs. Twenty-one states reported writing items for their own tests, sometimes using item banks. Some of these banks were built by the states themselves, and others were secured from test publishers. Criterion-referenced tests are most often used, with nationally standardized tests and national norms being used by relatively few states. The task of setting standards for the minimum competency tests was undertaken by the state board of education in eight states, the state education agency in six, testing specialist/state education agency contractor in five, subject matter specialists in five, and educator/citizen committees in four states. In cases where the state education agency or state board of education set the standards, it was usually with input from groups mentioned above.

As would be expected with criterion-referenced programs, the type of standard normally set was a percent right of items attempted, sometimes by total tests, sometimes by specific competencies; or the number correct of number attempted based on predetermined acceptable performance levels. Five states reported use of IRT scale score cut-off points, usually in combination with professional judgment relating to the performance level desired in scale score terms. Only two states reported use of norm-referenced scale cut-off scores. Seven states reported linking their standards to holistic writing ratings (e.g., New York specifies a 65 percent rating based on a model answer for a given topic).

Race and bias reviews are reported for tests used in all but a very few States. Statistical analysis of items used in tests is also reported by all but a few.

The fact that most states have developed their own tests, and that these tests are criterion-referenced measures employing standards arrived at by a variety of procedures, suggests that the rigor with which these tests have been constructed and the quality of the tests varies widely with the competence and experience of the state education agencies developing them, and with the procedures by which standards are set and student results evaluated.

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State	Type of Instr			Who Set Standards						Type of Standard				Bias Reviews Sex/Race	Item Selection		gnificant Changes
	Custom Wrote Items	Pub ishe standard test	Other decifv)	Test specialists/ contractor	Subject matter	Specialists/ Educators/ Citizens	SP Committee	Other (specify)	Percent right items	Cut off score, norm- ret.	Cut off score, norm- ret.	Cut off score, norm- ret.	Other (specify)		Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated	
Alabama	Y	N	With local help, writing sample done locally, very informal		3rd, 11 Grd. 11	N	Y		N		N	N	3,6,9: Mastery 11: combined Angoff and empirical method.	Y	Y	N	None
Alaska - No program																	
Arizona	*	*	*	N	N	N	N	IEA	**	**	**	**	*	**	**	*	*Varies according to IEA **Varies according to IEA and test used

SOURCE: Compiled for Office of Technology Assessment by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1985.

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State	Type of Instrument			Standards			Type of Standard			Bias Reviews		Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote items bank	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Who	Other (Specify)	Percent right	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Sex	Race	Stat analy	IRT calibrated	
Arkansas	Y: N teachers write them	N	Worked with con- tractor; curriculum specialists made recommendations	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	ARI
California	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
Colorado	N	Locally developed tests	Local district option	N	N	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Connecticut	Y	Holistic writing sample	N	N	Y	Math L.A.	DRP- reading level	Holistic writing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	None

ARI: Test Construction  
In process now of developing item specification.  
Score Reporting  
Reporting overall score; used to report by objective on!

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State	Type of Instrument			Who Set Standards								Type of Standard				Item Selection			Significant Changes
	Custom		Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/contractor	Subject matter specialists	Educators/citizens committee	SEA	Other (Specify)	Percent items right	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Cut-off score, IRT scale	Other (Specify)	Bias Reviews	Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated			
	Wrote items	Used bank																	
Delaware	1	1	1	Up to LEA's; Delaware made item bank available for each of the areas	Doesn't apply; made recommendations for people who wanted to use item bank, consequence great variability throughout State					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	* Doesn't apply because decision left up to LEA's		
District of Columbia	N	Y	N	N		Y	N	N	N	N	CRT by competency	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	None	
Florida	Y	N	N	N		N	N	N		State Board of Education	Y	N	N	FL1	Y	NA	NA	None	

FL1 SSAT1: There is also a cutoff score for each objective.

SSAT2: There is also a cutoff for each objective plus overall passing score.

FL2: o Training of item writers and reviewers

o Statistical analyses, performance on items for each racial group, p values by ethnic group

o Scatter plots by item by each ethnic group

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State	Type of instrument			Who set stan.				Type or standard				Bias Reviews	Item Selection		Significant Changes		
	Custom Wrote items	Used bank	Published standard test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/contractor	Subject matter specialists	Educators/citizens committee	Other Specify	Percent right items	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Cut-off score, IRT scale		Other (Specify)	Sex		Race	Stat. analyzed
Georgia	C.R.T. State item bank used both				N	N	St. Bd. set cutoff scores based on recomm. of committee		N	N	R, M		*	*	Y	Y: Rasch	*Special bias review panels are assembled to review test items and measurement procedures employed.
Hawaii		N	N	N	Writing sample 3)	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Holistic writing; grade 3 different fractional pt.	Y	Y	Y	Y

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State	Type of Instrument			Who Set Standards							Type of Standard				Blas Reviews Sex Race	Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote items bank	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/ contractor	Subject matter specialists	Educators/ citizens committee	Other (Specify)	Percent right	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Other Specify)	Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated					
Idaho	N	Pub.  SCORE	Score writing sample holistical	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Test Construc. Test origl- nally administered at grd. 9 thus a different test Norming Went with published C.R.T.			
Illinois	Not applicable																	
Indiana - No program																		
Iowa - No program																		
Kansas	Y	N	N	N	N	N	State Board of Education	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	None			

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State	Type of Instrument			Who Set Standards				Type of Standard				Bias Reviews Sex Race	Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote Items Used	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test Specialists/ Contractor	Subject	Citizens Committee	Other Specify	Percent Right	Cut off score, non-ref.	Cut off score, ref.	Other Specify		Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated	
Kentucky	Y for CRT	3 parts CTBS 1986-phase out of CTBS	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	M	Y	Y	N	CRT and norming.
Louisiana	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N		Y	Y	N	None
Maine - No program															
Maryland	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Rdg. math, citi zens		Y	Y	Y	1985-Score reports are more elaborate to help teachers and parents; holistic writing score
Massachusetts	LEA's ma do whatever want to			N	N	Within lea. district	N	depends on LEA & te					Y	N	



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State	Type of Instrument			Who Set Standards					Type of Standard				Bias Reviews Sex/Race	Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote/Used Items/bank	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/ contractor	Subject specialists	Educators/ citizens committee	SEA Board	Other (Specify)	Items right score, norm ref.	Cut-off score, norm ref.	Cut-off score, norm scale	Other (Specify)				
Michigan - No program																
Minnesota - No program																
Mississippi	Y	Y	N	Writing: holistic, 40% in 1980 analytic	N	N	N	Y	State Board	Y	Standard has	adopted	Y	Y	Y	Too recent
Montana - No program																
Nebraska	NA	NA	NA	Writing scored by local district	N	N	N	Y	75% Must pass 1 item per objective	N			Y	Y	Y	Too recent

NES: Choice of test is local option, but it must be criterion-referenced and mastery based (100% correct for passing).

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State	Type of Instrument				Who Set Standards							Type of Standards				Bias Review: Sex, Range	Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom		Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/contractor	Subject matter specialists	Educators/citizens committee	SBA	Other (Specify)	Right score, norm-ref. Cut-off	Scale score, norm-ref. Cut-off	High score, norm-ref. Cut-off	Other (Specify)	Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated				
	Wrote items for 9 & 11 reading, math and writing	Used bank																	
Nevada	Y	Y	3,6 SAT Reading, math and language arts	N	N	N	N	Y	Dir. of Planning & Evaluation and State Superintendent of Education	N	N	Y	High school testing only	Y	Y	Y: Using P & B values	Changed from A correct to IRT in Spring 1985		
New Hampshire No program																			
New Jersey	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N		N	N	Scale equated to previous years	Y	Y	N	None		
New Mexico	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		N	N	Holistic writing	Y	Y	Y	None		

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State	Type of Instrument			Who Use Instruments										Type of Standards			Item		Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote items	Used bank	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test specialists/contractor	Subject matter specialists	Educators/citizens	SEA committee	Other (Specify)	Percent right	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Cut-off score, IRT scale	Other (Specify)	Bias Reviews Sex Race	Stat. analyzed	Selection IRT calibrated			
New York	Y	N	N	Writing sample scored holistically; Degrees of Reading Power used in reading program	N	H	When prog. first started	N	Testing & subject matter specialists recommended cutoff scores	Math	N	N	N	Reading: readability of textbooks Writing: holistic judgement std. is 65% of model answer	*	Y	Reading items	*Exam review committee goes over each exam	
North Carolina	Y NC1			Writing sample: SEA set the criterion for passing; test is scored on a pass/fail basis	N	N	N	N	Comp. Test Commission Appointed by Governor for a 4 year term to advise State Board of Education regarding Selection test and cutoff scores	N	N	N	NC2	NC1	Y	N		None	
North Dakota - No program																			

- NC1: Initial legislation specified that students were administered in grade 11; new legislation for 1985-86 moves it to grade 10 items written by people within the State.
- NC2: Commission decided not to require 100 percent for passing so they reviewed items and came up with a number that represented minimum competency and calculated what percent these were of total number items on test.
- N Bias reviews:  
Test development  
o Bias committees made up of minority groups conducted workshops on what to look for  
o Statistical analyses--average difference between biased paf. of questions and looked at items that exceeded difference  
Field Test  
o Examined performance level of all groups on every item regarding difficulty of achievement

North Dakota -  
No program

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	Custom Wrote Items bank	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Test Specialists/ Contractors	Subject Matter	Specialists/ Educators/ Citizens	Committee	Other (Specify)	Percent Right	Cut-off score, norm-ref.	Cut-off score, IRT scale	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)		Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated	
Alabama - No program	N	NA	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Oregon	Y	N	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Pennsylvania	Chas. Merrill Co; items selected by testing staff			N	N	N	N	Committee of classroom teachers, took them through modified Angroff method for item cutoff scores; had no field data							Had been selected nationally	Y	Moving to spring testing
Rhode Island No program																	

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State	Type of Instrument			Type of Standard						Item Selection			Significant Changes
	Custom Wrote items	Used bank	Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Other (Specify)	Bias Reviews	Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated	
South Carolina	Y	Y	N	Writing: modified holistic on 4 pt. scale; modified analytic for papers below standard	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Change to I.R.T.
South Dakota - No Program													
Tennessee	Not available for interview												
Texas	Y	Y	N	TX2	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	None
Utah	NA	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N	NA	NA	NA

TX2: TABS is based on items developed on contract from Psych. Corp., CTBS, and other contractors, as well as State personnel. About 1/2 of all items are replaced each year, yielding an item pool from which to draw future items.

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State	Type of Instrument				Who Set Standard						Type or Standard					Item Selection		Significant Changes
	Custom		Publisher's standardized test	Other (Specify)	Specialists/contractor	Subject Matter Specialists	Educators/citizens committee	SEA	Other (Specify)	Percent right	Cut-off score, none-ref.	Cut-off score, H scale	Other (Specify)	Bias Reviews	Stat. analyzed	IRT calibrated		
	Wrote items	Used bank																
Vermont	NA	NA	N	NA	NA	NA	N	NA	NA	NA	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N	
Virginia (10th grade reading & math)	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Board approv	NA	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Initially used Jaeger procedure, now use Rasch.	
Washington - No program	See Table I																	
West Virginia - No program	Not avail.		1 for inte	iew														
Wisconsin																		
Wyoming - No state data, district required to assess																		

VA3: Tenth grade reading and math test was developed by combining a test purchased from a contractor and one test available from a Virginia school district. The SBA did no item analyses, but item statistics were already available for most items.