



State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0976/4
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2025 SENATE BILL 18

February 5, 2025 - Introduced by Senators JAGLER, QUINN, FEYEN, WANGGAARD, TOMCZYK, NASS, BRADLEY, WIMBERGER, KAPENGA, MARKLEIN, JAMES, JACQUE, TESTIN and CABRAL-GUEVARA, cosponsored by Representatives WITTKER, NOVAK, O'CONNOR, KREIBICH, TUSLER, GUNDRUM, DUCHOW, PENTERMAN, MURPHY, SORTWELL, BORN, MAXEY, BEHNKE, MELOTIK, MURSAU, PIWOWARCZYK, NEDWESKI, GUSTAFSON, DONOVAN, GREEN, DITTRICH, DALLMAN, BRILL, B. JACOBSON, RODRIGUEZ, SPIROS, ALLEN, KNODL, KAUFERT and MOSES. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 **AN ACT** *to renumber and amend* 115.385 (1) (b); *to amend* 115.385 (1) (c); *to*
2 *create* 115.385 (1) (b) 2m. and 118.30 (1j) of the statutes; **relating to:** changes
3 to the educational assessment program and the school and school district
4 accountability report.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, the Department of Public Instruction is required to annually publish a school and school district accountability report, commonly known as school and school district report cards, for the previous school year. To measure school performance and school district improvement for purposes of the report cards, particularly measures related to pupil achievement in reading and math, DPI uses data derived from pupil performance on assessments administered in the previous school year, including assessments commonly referred to as the Wisconsin Student Assessment System, which includes the Wisconsin Forward Exam, PreACT, the ACT with Writing, and Dynamic Learning Maps.

Under the bill, beginning with report cards published for the school year in which the bill becomes law, for the index system to identify school and school district performance and improvement, also known as the accountability rating categories, DPI must use the same cut scores, score ranges, and corresponding qualitative descriptions that DPI used for report cards published in the 2019-20

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school year. In addition, beginning with the WSAS administered in the school year in which the bill becomes law, DPI must do the following:

1. For the Wisconsin Forward exam in English Language Arts and Mathematics, align cut scores, score ranges, and pupil performance categories to the cut scores, score ranges, and pupil performance categories set by the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

2. For the PreACT and ACT with Writing in English, Reading, and Mathematics, use the same cut scores, score ranges, and pupil performance categories that DPI used for the same assessments administered in the 2021-22 school year. The bill specifically requires DPI to use the terms “below basic,” “basic,” “proficient,” and “advanced” for pupil performance categories on these assessments.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 115.385 (1) (b) of the statutes is renumbered 115.385 (1) (b) 1m.,
2 and 115.385 (1) (b) 1m. (intro.), as renumbered, is amended to read:

3 115.385 (1) (b) 1m. (intro.) ~~An~~ Subject to subd. 2m., an index system to
4 identify a school’s level of performance and a school district’s level of improvement
5 and to annually assign to each school and school district one of the following
6 performance categories:

7 **SECTION 2.** 115.385 (1) (b) 2m. of the statutes is created to read:

8 115.385 (1) (b) 2m. For the school and school district accountability reports
9 published for the school year beginning on the July 1 immediately preceding the
10 effective date of this subdivision [LRB inserts date], and for each school year
11 thereafter, the department shall use the same cut scores and the same score ranges
12 for the performance categories under subd. 1m. that the department used for the
13 report published under this section in the 2019-20 school year.

14 **SECTION 3.** 115.385 (1) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 115.385 (1) (c) ~~A qualitative definition for~~ For each of the 5 performance
2 categories in par. (b) 1m., the same qualitative definition that the department used
3 for the report published under this section in the 2019-20 school year.

4 **SECTION 4.** 118.30 (1j) of the statutes is created to read:

5 118.30 (1j) For examinations administered under this section or 20 USC 6311
6 (b) (2) in the school year beginning on the July 1 immediately preceding the effective
7 date of this subsection [LRB inserts date], and in each school year thereafter, the
8 department shall do all of the following:

9 (a) For examinations in English language arts and mathematics administered
10 to pupils in grades 3 to 8, use cut scores, score ranges, and pupil performance
11 categories that are aligned to the cut scores, score ranges, and pupil performance
12 categories set by the National Assessment of Educational Progress for the same
13 subject and the same grade.

14 (b) For examinations in English, reading, and mathematics administered to
15 pupils in grades 9 to 11, use the same cut scores, the same score ranges, and the
16 same pupil performance categories that the department used to evaluate the same
17 examinations administered in the 2021-22 school year, including the following
18 terminology for the pupil performance categories:

- 19 1. Below Basic.
- 20 2. Basic.
- 21 3. Proficient.
- 22 4. Advanced.

23

(END)