



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

TO: Dr. Doug Miller, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools, Tippecanoe School Corporation;
Dr. Neal H. McCutcheon, Principal, Wainwright Middle School
FROM: Brian Murphy, acting Hearing Officer
RE: Wainwright Middle School Appeal, 2015–16 Letter Grade
DATE: January 20, 2017

Finding: Wainwright Middle School should be given a D grade designation for 2015–16.

I. Facts

Wainwright Middle School (“WMS”) filed an appeal of an F grade for 2015-2016. The factual basis for the appeal is that, because of test booklet instruction irregularities, 34 students in grades 6, 7, and 8 were improperly allowed to use calculators on portions of the online math ISTEP+. As a result, it was deemed that the results of these 34 tests would not be valid, and the tests were not scored.

II. Argument and Analysis

The Indiana State Board of Education’s school accountability rule assigns points to a middle school based on performance and growth domains. See 511 Ind. Admin. Code §§ 6.2-10-3, 6.2-10-4 and 6.2-10-5. Both domains involve calculations that use ISTEP+ assessment results. See 511 Ind. Admin. Code §§ 6.2-10-4 and 6.2-10-5.

WMS argues that had the 34 students not used calculators on the portions of the test at issue, and had the resulting scores been included in its accountability grade calculation, WMS would have, more likely than not, received a D grade. I agree.

WMS received 58.2 overall points, resulting in an F. In its argument, WMS used historical assessment data for the 34 students to come to a conservative estimate that 24 of the 34 students would have passed the ISTEP+ this year. WMS also used historical data to make a conservative estimate of growth points had these students’ test scores been included. Based on its conservative estimates using historical data, WMS asserts that it would have received above 60 overall points, thus earning a D grade.

Cynthia Roach, the State Board’s Senior Director of Accountability & Assessment, analyzed the historical data and noted the following:

WMS was able to identify that roughly half of the students in question are in the high ability cohort, thus at least half would have most likely not only passed, but maintained at least a Standard or Typical level of growth. This additional information allowed for me to run further potential scenarios of their data.

These additional scenarios allowed me to conclude that these missing students would have not only allowed this school to raise their performance in mathematics within a potential range of 41.8% to 43.6%, but to also increase their growth enough to attain the necessary 70-71 point average (specifically 70.2-70.8) to earn a D.

For the foregoing reasons, WMS’s F grade should be changed to a D grade, and the D grade should be published in accordance with IC 20-31-8-6(b).