



Office of  
Financial Management  
STATE OF WASHINGTON

# Activity Inventory Performance Measure Assessment

## State School for the Blind

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Based on a review of the following: The agency strategic plan, the budget activity inventory, internal performance measure reports, and an interview with the agency contacts

# Current Strengths and Good Practices

- All the budget activities are linked to at least one performance measure.
- All of the current budget activity measures are also listed in the school's strategic plan.
- For the most part, the language of the measures is understandable to readers outside the academic and medical fields relating to special education and impaired vision.

# Budget Activity Comments and Potential Improvements

- The School for the Blind's suite of budget activity measures seems to be missing a number of topics and perspectives common to educational organizations. According to the school's strategic plan, a number of potential topics are already measured internally or under development:
  - The percent of students graduating on-time.
  - Student progress in standardized reading and math tests (If the WASL is not an appropriate tool, pick another assessment methodology.)
  - The percent of graduates enrolled in post-secondary vocational or academic programs.
  - The number of students attending classes in Vancouver.
  - The number of students living on campus.
  - The number of students taught by outreach services.
  - The number of students on waiting lists for programs offered by the School for the Blind.
- The current, less relevant activity measures should be replaced by new developments where appropriate.

# Analysis of Current Activity Measure Data

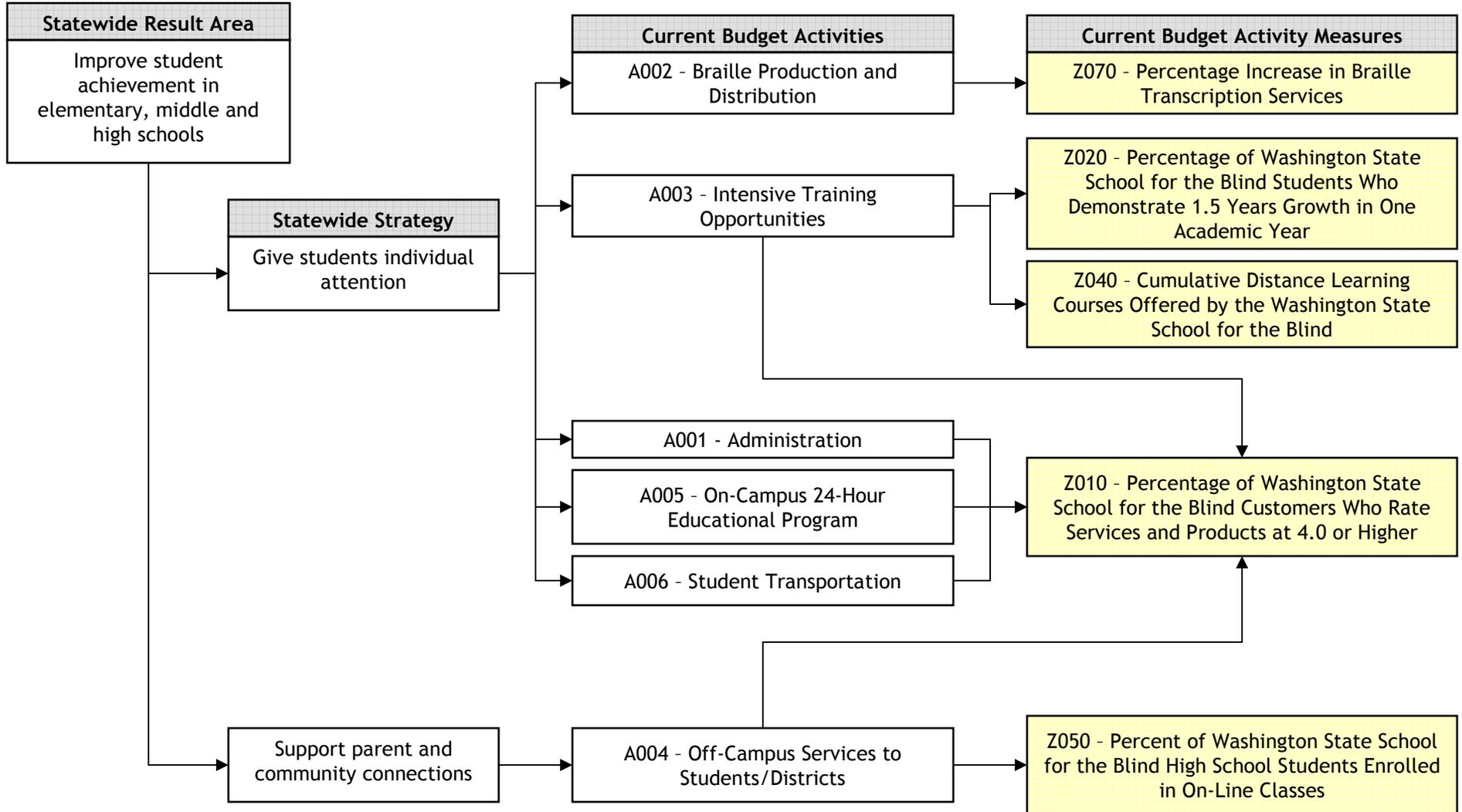
- None of the measures reported enough data for any analysis.

# Agency Comments and Future Actions

We appreciated the opportunity to meet with Brian and Adam to go over the measures and hopefully establish measure that will make sense to the public and work for the school. It is our hopes that these can be kept current for a number of years to establish trend data.

- **Braille transcription** - This is the heart of literacy for many children - You have to have books on time to gain the information and help level the playing field with sighted students
  - Number of pages brailled per quarter - output measure
  - Percentage of students getting braille books on time - Our target (97%) - outcome measure
- **Professional training** - WSSB provides training to individuals through Washington and the Northwest - This program is self-supporting and based on a fee for service model.
  - Number of teachers/paraprofessionals trained each quarter (output)
  - Number of teachers/paraprofessionals taking/passing Braille Literacy Usage Exam (B.L.U.E.) - outcome measure - No formal target has been set on this.
- **Student Performance** - Students generally come to WSSB to gain additional skills in a shorter period of time. This has worked well for years due to the intensive 24 hour program that is provided - once the students attain their goals, the students often return to their local districts.
- **On-campus:**
  - Number of students on campus each quarter. Target (65-75 students) - output measure
  - Eighty percent of students will gain 1.5 years growth in one year in expanded CORE competencies. (Which includes specialized skill development for independence topics) - outcome measure
- **Off-campus:**
  - Number of students served through off-campus (outreach) services per month. Target (500 per month) - output measure
  - A measure needs to be developed for the outcomes for the off campus/outreach services. In the past, this measure has been a stakeholder/customer satisfaction survey.

# Budget Activity & Performance Measure Linkages

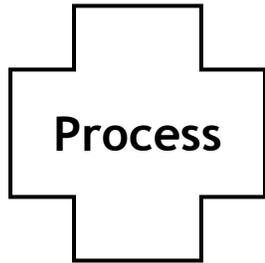


**Legend**

Also Current Strategic Plan Measure

# Budget Activity Measure Perspectives

⑤ Process characteristics the customers/stakeholders want

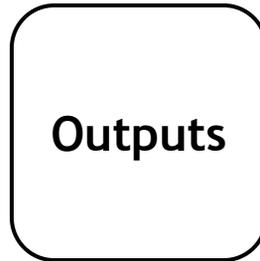


⑥ Process characteristics the agency wants

Z050 - Percent of Washington State School for the Blind High School Students Enrolled in On-Line Classes

⑥

③ Product/service attributes customers/stakeholders want



④ Product/service attributes the agency wants

Z010 - Percentage of Washington State School for the Blind Customers Who Rate Services and Products at 4.0 or Higher

③

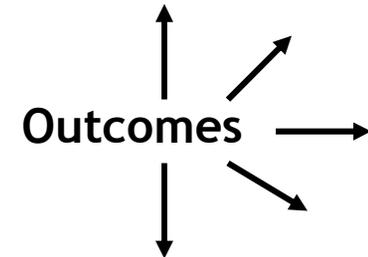
Z040 - Cumulative Distance Learning Courses Offered by the Washington State School for the Blind

④

Z070 - Percentage Increase in Braille Transcription Services

④

① Customer/stakeholder desired outcomes



② Agency desired outcomes

Z020 - Percentage of Washington State School for the Blind Students Who Demonstrate 1.5 Years Growth in One Academic Year

②

## Legend

Strategic Plan and Budget Activity Measure

# Activity Measure Critique – Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

**Performance Measure Description:** An annual customer satisfaction survey on a standard 1 to 5 Likert scale.

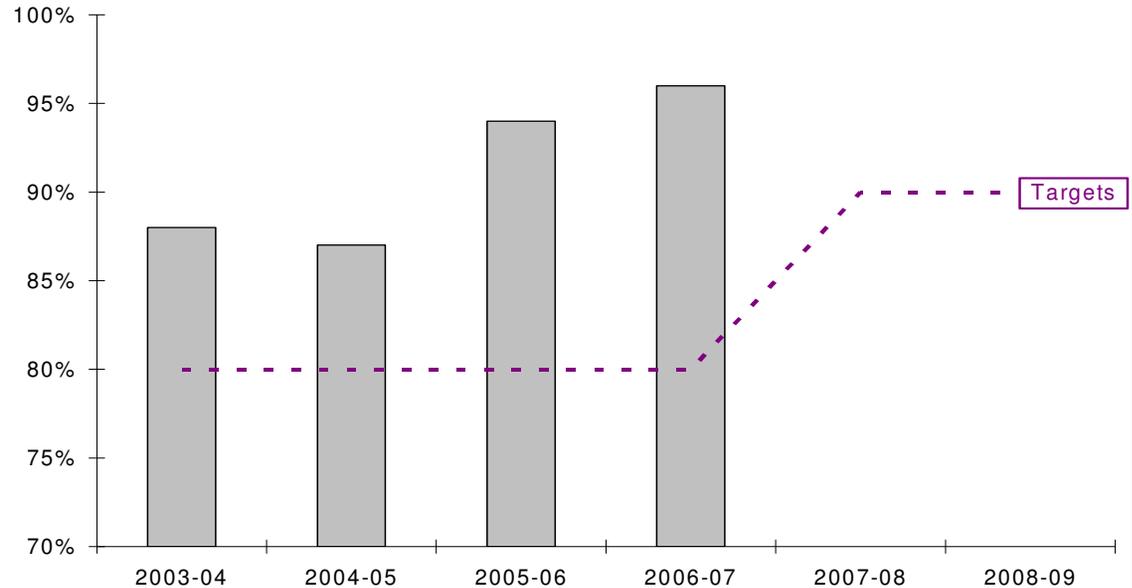
**Budget Activity Links:** A001, A003, A004, A005, A006

**Category of Measure:** The survey rates processes and outputs.

**Analysis of Variation:** There is not enough data available in this format to do any data analysis.

**Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance:** The 80% target has been increased to 90% to bring it more in line with recent actual results.

**2010 - Percentage of Washington State School for the Blind Customers Who Rate Services and Products at 4.0 or Higher**



## Comments About Desirable Characteristics

**Relevance:** A single survey question with only four data points is a fairly weak performance indicator for five different budget activities.

**Timeliness:** An annual survey can not yield timely data, but more frequent measurements are impractical.

**Understandability:** The “4.0 or higher” terminology in the title assumes the reader knows this is measured on a 1 to 5 Likert scale.

**Reliability:** Depends on the sample size and repeatability of the survey methodology.

**Comparability:** These responses can be compared against the other questions in the survey, but are difficult to benchmark against other institutions.

**Cost Effectiveness:** Over time, surveys become very cost effective if administration and analysis is done by the school.

## General Comments & Explanations:

### Agency Comment:

We plan on continuing to collect and use this information internally.

We have our own software for electronic surveying, which is accessible for blind and visually impaired persons. So, our cost is minimal.

# Activity Measure Critique – Student Academic Growth

**Performance Measure Description:** A measure of academic achievement that allows for the unique challenges faced by visually impaired students.

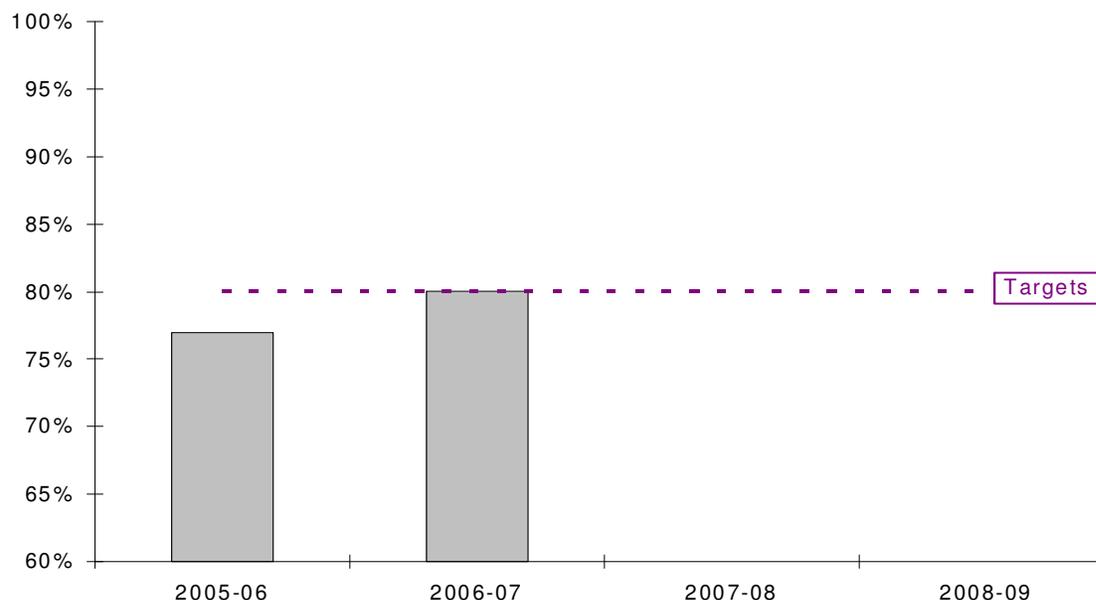
**Budget Activity Links:** A003 - Intensive Training Opportunities

**Category of Measure:** A desirable outcome

**Analysis of Variation:** There is not enough data available in this format to do any data analysis.

**Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance:** The school achieved its 80% target in 2006-07.

**Z020 - Percentage of Washington State School for the Blind Students Who Demonstrate 1.5 Years Growth in One Academic Year**



## Comments About Desirable Characteristics

**Relevance:** Directly related to the mission of the school.

**Timeliness:** As an annual measure it is not timely, but the frequency is appropriate.

**Understandability:** The language is clear, but the significance and definition of “1.5 years growth” is not explained in the notes.

**Reliability:** Depends on how well understood and how rigidly the definition of “1.5 years growth” is applied during the evaluation.

**Comparability:** Given the customized operational definition of “1.5 years growth”, it is doubtful this can be benchmarked against other similar institutions.

**Cost Effectiveness:** This assessment should already be part of each students’ progress evaluation.

## General Comments & Explanations:

### Agency Comments:

This is really the most effective way to show growth, since the WASL is a poor and invalid measure for visually impaired students.

We believe the graph is not set up correctly. Should the vertical axis be years growth (i.e. .5 year, 1.0 years, 1.25, 1.5, etc.)?

### OFM Comment:

As currently titled, the vertical axis is correct. The title would need to be changed to, “The average years growth shown by WSSB students...” This proposed change is not advisable.

# Activity Measure Critique – Distance Learning Courses Offered

**Performance Measure Description:** Classes offered through interactive audio/video or internet classes.

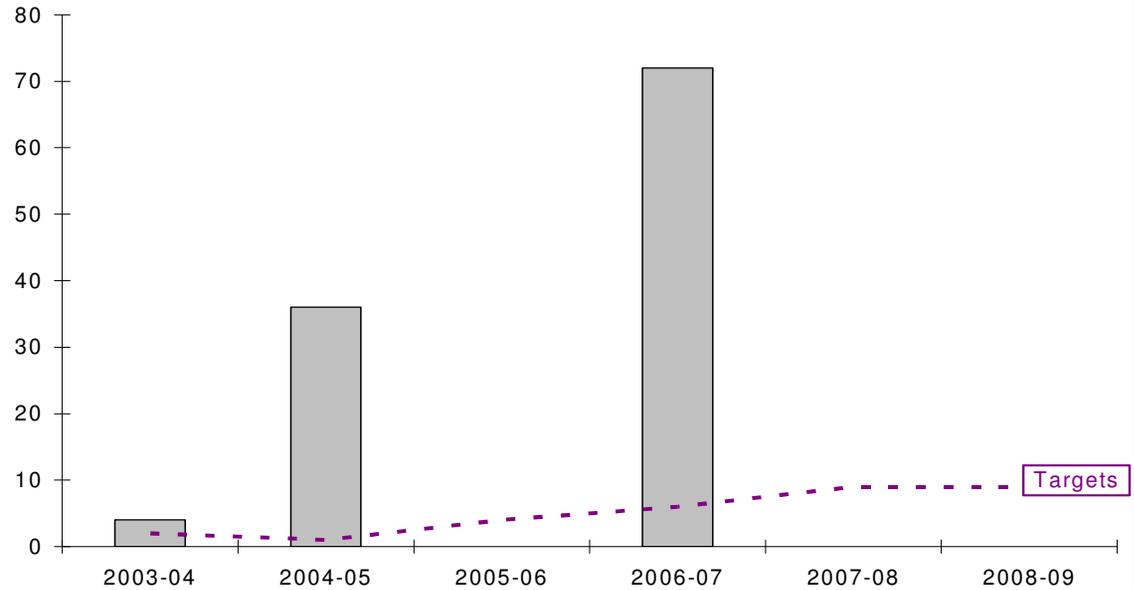
**Budget Activity Links:** A003 - Intensive Training Opportunities

**Category of Measure:** The number of courses is an output.

**Analysis of Variation:** There is not enough data available in this format to do any data analysis.

**Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance:** The actual numbers has far outpaced the targets. The targets should be reevaluated.

**Z040 - Cumulative Distance Learning Courses Offered by the Washington State School for the Blind**



## Comments About Desirable Characteristics

**Relevance:** The number of classes is not very relevant without a result measure related to increased accessibility, improved academic achievement, or reduced costs.

**Understandability:** Cumulative data is difficult to understand. This would be better measuring the actual number of offerings each year.

**Comparability:** This could be benchmarked against what other similar institutions are providing.

**Timeliness:** As an annual measure it is not timely, but the frequency is appropriate.

**Reliability:** Should be good as long as the operational definition of what constitutes a course is well understood.

**Cost Effectiveness:** Counting the number of courses offered should not be a significant additional expense.

## General Comments & Explanations:

### Agency Comments:

We will continue to track student involvement, but this will be an internal measure.

# Activity Measure Critique – On-Line Class Enrollment

**Performance Measure Description:** No additional explanation needed.

**Budget Activity Links:** A004 - Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

**Category of Measure:** The percent enrolled in a type of class is a process-level characteristic.

**Analysis of Variation:** There is not enough data available in this format to do any data analysis.

**Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance:** The actual data has never achieved the 50% target, and recent years have shown a decline.

**Z050 - Percent of Washington State School for the Blind High School Students Enrolled in On-Line Classes**



## Comments About Desirable Characteristics

**Relevance:** The type of classes taken is not very relevant without a result measure related to increased accessibility, improved academic achievement, or reduced costs.

**Timeliness:** As an annual measure it is not timely, but the frequency is appropriate.

**Understandability:** Easy to understand.

**Reliability:** Should be easy to identify from enrollment records what type of class students took.

**Comparability:** This could be benchmarked against what other similar institutions are providing.

**Cost Effectiveness:** This data should not require significant additional expenses to gather.

## General Comments & Explanations:

### Agency Comment:

This will be an internal measure that we will track. We will also examine the additional number of students enrolled from throughout the state; not just on the campus.

# Activity Measure Critique – Braille Transcription Services

**Performance Measure Description:** An additional service provided by the school.

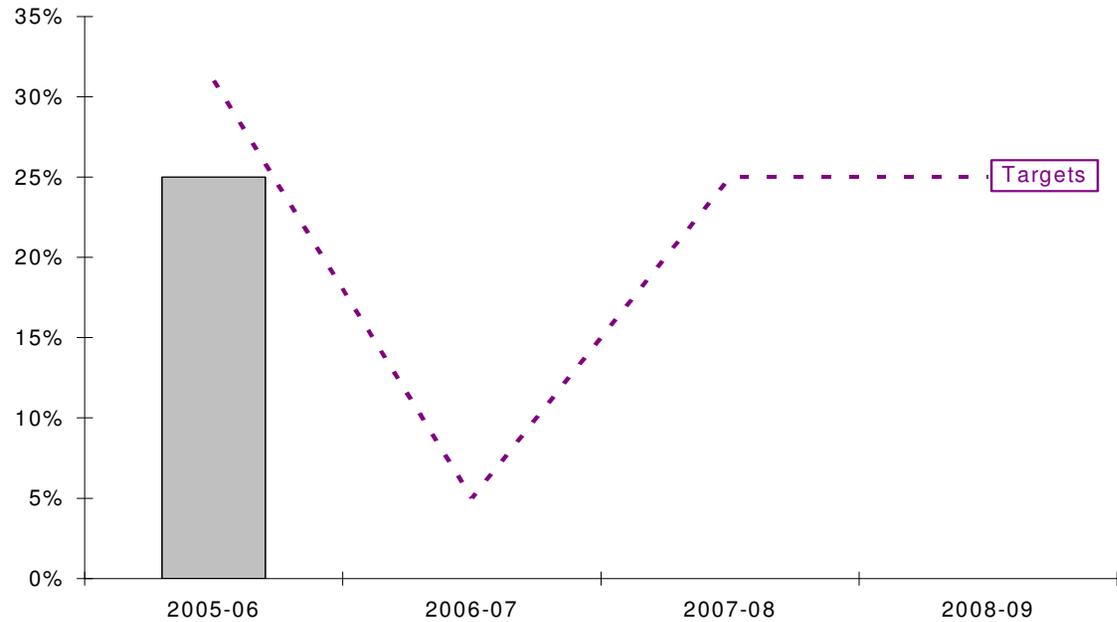
**Budget Activity Links:** A002 - Braille Production and Distribution

**Category of Measure:** The amount of growth another form of output measure.

**Analysis of Variation:** There is not enough data available in this format to do any data analysis.

**Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance:** While the percentage growth did not achieve the 30% target, the real story is the reason for the precipitous drop in growth targets for 2006-07.

**Z070 - Percentage Increase in Braille Transcription Services**



## Comments About Desirable Characteristics

**Relevance:** The unanswered question is why growth in this service is desirable. Does this generate additional funds or improve student learning?

**Understandability:** Percent growth is less understandable than some standard measure of pages produced. The dip in the target for 2006-07 also needs an explanation.

**Comparability:** This could be benchmarked against what other transcription services produce.

**Timeliness:** As an annual measure, this is not timely. If it was changed to a production measure, it could be tracked quarterly.

**Reliability:** A percentage increase is calculated from some point in time. Is this increase calculated from a single year or from a 10-year baseline?

**Cost Effectiveness:** However easy it is to calculate, the usefulness of this measure is not evident.

## General Comments & Explanations:

### Agency Comment:

Something is wrong with this slide - might be the data that was submitted or that changes made in the system did not get loaded in all areas. The increase target should have been 5%. We do know that WSSB had a huge increase of 25% - more than anticipated and data for 2006-07 school year should have been submitted.