

Transitioning to New Assessment Systems: *Lessons from Two States*

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Topics for Discussion

1. Assessment landscape – opportunity for balance and rethinking priorities
2. Two state stories
 - a) California
 - b) New Hampshire
3. Getting ahead of the curve

Assessment Landscape

- Adoption of rigorous college- and career-ready standards and need for assessments aligned to those standards
- Calls for new or different approaches
 - CCSSO report
 - Council of Great City Schools
 - Testing opponents as well as advocates
 - Option to create “hybrid” tests using items or components from multi-state consortia
- Federal initiatives
 - Every Student Succeeds Act
 - Testing Action Plan

Transition – Why Now?

- Great opportunity – moment in time
 - “Let’s measure what we value instead of valuing what can easily be measured.”

Henry Braun, Boston College

New Hampshire - Capitalizing on State Strengths and Values and Federal Flexibility

- New Hampshire was approved by USED to pilot a customized approach to assessment
 - Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE)
 - Originally 4, now 8 districts out of 85
 - Non-pilots using Smarter Balanced
 - Pilot sites use SB once in each grade span
 - 2 years
 - Currently ELA, math, science, the Arts, & NH Work-Study Practices

New Hampshire's Assessment System Redesign

- Part of its vision for a more innovative system of assessments aligned to state values and priorities for its students
 - Leader in competency-based education
 - More local management of assessment..provides alternative route of demonstrating measurable progress in student outcomes
 - Curriculum embedded: linked to local instruction and designed to provide timely, useful feedback to teachers, students, and parents
 - Reduce level of standardized testing

New Hampshire's Assessment System Redesign (cont.)

- Key component is set of common, complex, multi-part tasks that require students to apply what they have learned through research projects, presentations, performances
- Focus is on deeper learning of core competencies such as content mastery, critical thinking, self-direction
- Implemented with support from foundations (Nellie Mae, Hewlett) and NCIEA

New Hampshire's Assessment System Redesign (cont.)

- Outcome of multi-year effort to redesign AND refocus state's assessment system around shared responsibility for student success
- Data are being systematically collected so state can study
 - Training & PD concerns
 - Comparability issues
 - Scoring challenges (who, how)
 - Appropriate evidence for Peer Review

California - Capitalizing on State Strengths and Values and Political Landscape

- California Superintendent required to recommend to CA State Board of Education and legislature the build-out of the assessment system in March 2016
 - California currently assesses what is required by federal law
 - Taking advantage of federal flexibility without a waiver
 - Governor, State Chief, and State Board President agree
 - Principle of “subsidiarity” in full force
 - Alignment of resources/programs

Subsidiarity

- **Subsidiarity** is a principle of social organization. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines subsidiarity as the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary (that is, a supporting, rather than a subordinate) function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level.

Draft Framework for Developing the Assessment System

- California stakeholders — including students, educators, and parents — envision and will benefit from...
 1. **...an integrated, coherent system of multiple measures...**
 2. **...a purpose-driven system...**
 3. **...an inclusive system...**

Draft Framework for Developing the Assessment System

- California stakeholders — including students, educators, and parents — envision and will benefit from...
 4. **...a system that is guided by research and industry best-practice-supported expectations...**
 5. **...an innovative system...**
 6. **...a transparent system...**

Draft Framework for Developing the Assessment System

- California stakeholders — including students, educators, and parents — envision and will benefit from...
 7. **...a dynamic, streamlined system that is feasible, efficient, and cost-effective...**
 8. **...general guidance, resources, and tools from the CDE that support local-level decision-making about the combination of measures that is most appropriate in each situation.**

Gathering Stakeholder Input

- Subject matter experts
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Technology
 - Visual and Performing Arts
 - ELA
 - Mathematics
- Advocacy groups

Gathering Stakeholder Policy Input

Assessment Name	Subject/Content Area	Grade(s)	Student Population(s)	Assessment Type	Delivery Mode
<i>Examples: Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment, Desired Results Developmental Profile, California English Language Development Test</i>	<i>Examples: Science, Social Studies, Performing Arts</i>	<i>Examples: Grade 2, Grades 6-8, Grade 12</i>	<i>Examples: All grade 5 students, English learners, Students enrolled in Biology</i>	<i>Examples: Formative, Interim, Summative</i>	<i>Examples: Computer-supported, Computer adaptive, Paper-pencil</i>

Gathering Stakeholder Policy Input

Item Type(s)	Purpose	Audience	Responsibility	Alignment to Guiding Principles
<i>Examples: Selected-response items, Performance tasks, Portfolio</i>	<i>Examples: Inform instructional decision-making, Program evaluation, District accountability</i>	<i>Examples: Elementary grade educators, Parents, District administrators</i>	<i>Examples: Local, State-Supported, State</i>	

Emerging Lessons Learned

- Build on state's unique strengths or what's currently working well
- Take advantage of the political landscape
- Components must reflect core values and priorities
- Transparency is critical
 - Here's where we are, where we want to go, and how we propose to get there
- Be collaborative and leverage resources and expertise across educators, schools, states
- Monitor progress and scale up gradually

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