Title: Summary of research on statewide assessment system components

Date: November 2014

Question: >> Could you provide research addressing the components of an effective statewide assessment system?

Response:

We hope the following references on the topic of statewide assessment systems are helpful to you.

 ➢ Citations include a link to a free online version.
 ➢ Citations are accompanied by an abstract, excerpt, or summary written by the author or publisher of the document.

We have not done an evaluation of the methodological rigor of these resources, but provide them for your information only.

References

Ananda, S., & Rabinowitz, S. (2001). *High stakes and assessment innovation: A negative correlation?* San Francisco: WestEd. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/highstakes.pdf

Abstract: "Thus far, there has been an inverse correlation between innovation and accountability in statewide assessment systems: the higher the stakes attached to assessment results, the more conservative the assessment methodology ultimately used." This research report examines the impact of high stakes accountability systems on assessment innovation, particularly as the use of high stakes has affected the introduction of performance-based assessments. Included are two case studies of state programs (Kentucky and California) whose experiences illustrate the increasing and often overwhelming demands for accountability throughout the education system and the inadequacy of existing assessment delivery infrastructure and methodology to readily accommodate innovation. The report includes a series of "lessons learned" that may be helpful to states now revisiting their assessment systems.

California Department of Education, Assessment Development and Administration Division District, School, and Innovation Branch. (2013). *Report to the Governor and the State Legislature: Recommendations for transitioning California to a future assessment system*. Sacramento, CA: Author. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/suptrecrptjan13.pdf

Excerpt: The State Superintendent considered [stakeholders'] feedback as well as federal and state accountability requirements, current research regarding assessment practices, and budget constraints in developing recommendations for the new system. These recommendations, which are detailed in Section 3 [pages 37–51] of this report, require a shift from current assessment

practices as they call for the implementation of and access to the full range of SBAC assessments; advocate assessments in other curricular areas; support the use of innovative item questions and technology-based resources, such as automated scoring engines; encourage ongoing consultation with stakeholders to develop alternative paths or options for meeting high school graduation requirements; support local use of diagnostic assessments for grade two; encourage developing reporting resources; and advise a suspension of STAR Program assessments not mandated by federal law or the Early Assessment Program. At the heart of the recommendations is a clear vision and commitment to establishing a bold and innovative assessment system that includes a variety of assessment approaches and item types that model and promote high-quality teaching and student learning and sets a course to ensure that all California students are well prepared to enter college and careers in today's competitive global economy.

Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center. (2009). *Overview of selected state assessment systems.* Naperville, IL: Author. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/resource/imported/Overview_State_Assessment_Systems.pdf

Abstract: This 2009 overview surveyed statewide assessment reform in four broad categories, 1) content-standards-based assessment, 2) interim and benchmark assessment, 3) formative and classroom assessment, and 4) online or computer-based assessment. The Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center (AACC) provided national and technical expertise to the collaborative state survey requested by the Wisconsin Next Generation Assessment Task Force. Innovative assessment practices were identified in nine states with important lessons for all states and the school districts they serve. The AACC provided technical input and review to the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center for this document.

Mid South Regional Resource Center. (2004). *State standards and assessments: Critical elements checklist.* Lexington, KY: Author. Retrieved on October, 28, 2014, from http://0-files.eric.ed.gov.opac.msmc.edu/fulltext/ED484462.pdf

Abstract: This document, which is a checklist, was designed for use by a state team to conduct a preliminary self-analysis of the state's system of standards and assessments. The checklist is organized into the following sections: (1) Content Standards; (2) Academic Achievement Standards; (3) Overview of the Statewide Assessment System; (4) Technical Quality; (5) Alignment of Academic Content Standards, Academic Achievement Standards, and Assessments; (6) Inclusion of All Students in the Assessment System; and (7) An Effective System of Assessment Reports.

Perie, M., Marion, S., & Gong, B. (2009). Moving toward a comprehensive assessment system. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, 28*(3), 5–13. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from http://www.ncaase.com/docs/PerieMarionGong2009.pdf

Abstract: Local assessment systems are being marketed as formative, benchmark, predictive, and a host of other terms. Many so-called formative assessments are not at all similar to the types of assessments and strategies studied by Black and Wiliam (1998) but instead are interim assessments. In this article, we clarify the definition and uses of interim assessments and argue that they can be an important piece of a comprehensive assessment system that includes formative, interim, and summative assessments. Interim assessments are given on a larger scale than formative assessments, have less flexibility, and are aggregated to the school or district level to help inform policy. Interim assessments are driven by their purpose, which fall into the categories of instructional, evaluative, or predictive. Our intent is to provide a specific definition for these "interim assessments" and to develop a framework that district and state leaders can use to evaluate these systems for purchase or development. The discussion lays out some concerns with the current state of these assessments as well as hopes for future directions and suggestions for further research.

Rabinowitz, S., Roeber, E., Schroeder, C., & Sheinker, J. (2006). *Creating aligned standards and assessment systems*. Washington, DC: The Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from
http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2006/Creating_Aligned_Standards_2006.pdf

Abstract: The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires academic content and achievement standards at the contiguous grade levels 3–8 and one grade in the high school span. Because many states previously developed standards for grade spans, state academic content standards and, consequently, academic achievement standards are undergoing revisions to include grade-specific standards or grade-level expectations. The experience of states in attempting to fully align assessments with previously developed academic content standards has produced valuable lessons about the role of standards in an aligned system and the implications of this role for their development and organization. Attention to vision, purpose, and consistency of organization with the uses to be made of the academic content standards provide important guides for their revision.

This paper provides a discussion of lessons learned in addition to suggestions and recommendations to state departments and state policy makers for revising academic content standards in a manner to support the improved alignment of assessments with the standards. A checklist is provided to help states consider what actions they can take to enhance consistency within and across content areas and to improve their usefulness in guiding the development of aligned assessments in the standards-based system. An argument is made that consistency in the organization of academic content standards documents serves not only to enhance alignment of academic content standards and the comprehensive assessment systems, but also the productive use of the document by all stakeholders.

Ryan, J. M. (2010*). Envisioning a state educational system: Improving learning through a comprehensive assessment system*. Olympia, WA: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Retrieved on October 28, 2014, from
https://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/ClassroomAssessmentIntegration/pubdocs/CompAssessmentSystemReport.pdf

Excerpt: The purpose of this paper is to describe the key elements of an effective comprehensive assessment system. The major sections of this paper are organized around these elements:
1. Purposes of assessment;
2. Connections among curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
3. Major Assessment Components: summative, interim and formative assessment;
4. Validity of assessments and evaluation of the assessment system;
5. Statewide Data Information System;
6. Professional development; and
7. Summary and discussion. [See pages 4–10 for discussion of major assessment components.]

Additional organization to consult

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI)
http://csai-online.org/

From the website: WestEd and CRESST, two national leaders in the standards and assessment field, continue their collaboration in providing high-quality services as the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI). CSAI provides comprehensive services, tools, and resources that support the following goals:
1. Improve state policies, practices, and support to districts for implementation of rigorous, college- and career-readiness standards and assessments
2. Increase the capacity of the Regional Comprehensive Centers to meet the technical assistance needs of states, thereby increasing educators' instructional skills supporting student learning
3. Continuously improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the CSAI to support the long-term sustainability of school reform efforts
4. Expand the reach of the CSAI through successful collaboration with national associations as well as other research and technical assistance organizations.

METHODS

Keywords and Search Strings Used in the Search
"Statewide assessment system(s)"; "statewide assessment systems" AND components

Search of Databases
EBSCO Host; Google, and Google Scholar

Criteria for Inclusion
When REL West staff review resources, they consider—among other things—four factors:

- **Date of the Publication:** The most current information is included, except in the case of nationally known seminal resources.

- **Source and Funder of the Report/Study/Brief/Article:** Priority is given to IES, nationally funded, and certain other vetted sources known for strict attention to research protocols.

- **Methodology:** Sources include randomized controlled trial studies, surveys, self-assessments, literature reviews, and policy briefs. Priority for inclusion generally is given to randomized controlled trial study findings, but the reader should note at least the following factors when basing decisions on these resources: numbers of participants (Just a few? Thousands?); selection (Did the participants volunteer for the study or were they chosen?); representation (Were findings generalized from a homogeneous or a diverse pool of participants? Was the study sample representative of the population as a whole?).

- **Existing Knowledge Base:** Although we strive to include vetted resources, there are times when the research base is limited or nonexistent. In these cases, we have included the best resources we could find, which may include newspaper articles, interviews with content specialists, organization websites, and other sources.