

State Assessment Proposal

Purpose and Use

The first and foremost use of quality assessments is to give students, teachers and families meaningful information about the progress of student learning. This information helps guide the next steps in learning based on each student's strengths and needs.

Teachers and schools use quality assessment practices as part of teaching and learning. The majority of these assessments occur at the classroom level, with common assessments at the school and district level, and state mandated assessments at the state level. Teachers use a balance of assessments that serve specific purposes as described below:

- Formative – occur frequently, embedded within teaching & learning,
- Interim – periodic checks, track progress toward learning targets,
- Summative – at the end of learning, assess degree of mastery.

Teachers employ a wide variety of strategies to assess student learning in meaningful ways and help build a student body of evidence. Students and their families are informed of the results of assessments through effective mechanisms that provide results, descriptive feedback and helpful interpretations and analyses. Accordingly, students and families work collaboratively with teachers to build a complete picture of a student's strengths and struggles.

It is critical that the system of classroom, local and state assessments provides an appropriate balance of assessment practices based on the purpose for and use of each assessment. Three categories of purpose for and use of assessment are listed below:

Instruction

- planning instruction
- timely student feedback
- next steps in learning
- adjustments to instruction

Comparability

- student learning of standards
- effectiveness of instruction
- program evaluation for actionable adjustments

Accountability

- ensure growth and achievement for all students
- ensure reduction of achievement gaps
- evaluate effectiveness of schools

State assessments have a different purpose and use than local assessments. In the next section, the purpose for and use of state assessments and local assessments is listed. In addition, a possible scenario is presented for the redesign of the state assessment system.

Purpose and Use: State Standards & State Assessments

Instruction

- planning instructional programming at the school and district level
- curriculum review and mapping

Comparability

- school effectiveness in teaching of state standards
- a part of body of evidence for program evaluation

Accountability

- district accountability to implementation of state standards (demonstrated through student achievement of and growth toward mastery of state standards)
- school accountability to implementation of state standards (demonstrated through student achievement of and growth toward mastery of state standards)
- district and school accountability to reduction of achievement gaps

Purpose and Use: Local Assessments

Instruction

- planning instruction
- professional learning community data discussions
- timely student feedback
- next steps in learning
- adjustments to instruction
- communication of student progress for families

Comparability

- student learning of district curriculum (including state standards)
- analysis of instructional effectiveness in professional learning communities
- district and school program evaluation for actionable adjustments

Accountability

- schools ensure timely growth toward and achievement of district curriculum (including state standards) for every student
- schools ensure reduction of achievement gaps

Purpose and Use: Classroom Assessment Practices

Instruction

- planning instruction to meet the needs of all students
- professional learning community data discussions
- immediate student feedback
- immediate adjustments to next steps in learning
- immediate adjustments to instruction
- frequent communication of student progress to families

Comparability

- each student's learning of district curriculum (including state standards)
- professional learning communities analysis of instructional effectiveness
- classroom and school program evaluation for immediate adjustments

Accountability

- student accountability to their own learning to ensure timely growth toward and achievement of district curriculum (including state standards) for every student
- teachers ensure reduction of achievement gaps

Flexibility

It is recommended that Colorado state laws that directly (SB212, READ Act, SB191) or indirectly (SB163) mandate testing are revised to allow for local school districts that meet or exceed the state expectations of school performance be able to have the option of reducing the frequency of state testing in favor of demonstrations of meeting state expectations through a robust local assessment system.

The scenarios that follow illustrate the recommended frequency of state testing. Flexibility would include:

- School districts that want to administer English Language Arts every year to all students would apply for a waiver to participate at that level.
- School districts that want to administer the scenario with a sampling model (like NAEP) would apply for a waiver to participate at that level.
- Parents who do not want their students to participate in standardized testing would have the option of "opting out" without negatively impacting educator and school accountability.

Scenario: Reducing the hours per year that each grade spends on standardized statewide summative assessments.

- Literacy (ELA) and numeracy (math) are assessed at least once in each school level.
- Social studies and science are assessed once in the elementary and middle school levels.
- The blue shading shows the pathway of a student across grades 3rd through 11th.

Grade	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
3 rd	ELA (Reading & Writing)	ELA							
4 th	Social Studies	SS							
5 th	Math Science	M Sc							
6 th	ELA (Reading & Writing)	ELA							
7 th	Social Studies	SS							
8 th	Math Science Or Algebra I	M Sc Algl							
High School	End-of-Year Algebra I Integrative I	EoY Algl or Intgl							
	ELA (once in HS) Or Augmented PWR	ELA							
	PWR (11 th grade)	PWR							

Scenario: READ Act

- All students undergo an initial screening and participate in the Beginning of Year (BoY) benchmark of the interim assessment.
- All students with a Significant Reading Deficiency are given a diagnostic assessment to identify their specific reading needs.
- All students with a Significant Reading Deficiency have frequent progress monitoring through the assessment practices relevant to their learning needs in reading.

Kindergarten	1st	2nd	3rd
<p>All Students: Screening</p> <p>Students with SRD: Diagnostic Progress Monitor (using probes, classroom and interim assessments)</p>	<p>New Students: Screening</p> <p>All Students: BoY interim benchmark</p> <p>Students with SRD: Diagnostic Progress Monitor (using probes, classroom and interim assessments)</p>	<p>New Students: Screening</p> <p>All Students: BoY interim benchmark</p> <p>Students with SRD: Diagnostic Progress Monitor (using probes, classroom and interim assessments)</p>	<p>New Students: Screening</p> <p>All Students: BoY interim benchmark</p> <p>Students with SRD: Diagnostic Progress Monitor (using probes, classroom and interim assessments)State</p> <p>All Students: Summative ELA State Test</p>