

JOINT FEEDBACK TOUR – COLORADO’S NEW ASSESSMENT SYSTEM QUESTIONS

Greeley - November 8, 2010

1. Does this assessment system make sense to you?

- Not clear on system
 - What is the connection to SB191
 - What is the connection to the interim component of SB163?
 - Can we use formative only? No summative?
 - *Facilitators: Unlikely (1) capturing data would compromise the intent of formative instruction (2) we would jeopardize federal funding.*
 - Why assess everything?
 - *Facilitators: Requirement of SB212 to assess PWR.*
- Would like to include both end-of-course and integrated assessments in the high school summative assessment.
- Will 11th grade include both State summative assessments AND the nationally recognized assessment?
- Will CDE accept existing formative/interim assessments at the district level?
 - If so, who pays?
 - What about districts without resources? Does the State pay for the assessments, districts?
- System is there, but nothing about it is actionable. Need to establish intervention demands that ensure that high school graduation is at the level expected in PWR.
- Where’s the money for intervention – NOW!?! (Afterschool/Summer etc.). New standards present a challenge to students who are already behind. How do we support their needs in the transition process?
- How do we best serve students who are unsuccessful?
- Need clarity in definitions – e.g. Interim –Should the State collect interim data? The recommendation is not to collect it for punitive reasons, but for professional development reasons.
- Recommended that a decision be made regarding student accountability in the system. Should summative results inform GPA or promotion? Statewide? Local?
- Recommends that the State be careful not to unintentionally create two systems: 1) a State assessment that informs one set of criteria or outcomes ; and, 2) local assessments that inform the rest.
- CELA needs to be transformed in a way equivalent to the new system. Would like to see a screener and summative assessment that is aligned, valid and reliable to WIDA.

2. What do you like about these components?

- System starts w/ early childhood
- Teacher education is actionable at all levels
- Likes standards, but must follow through with implementation and supports
- ICAP useful for stopgap
- Like CiC and Dashboard
- Ongoing multiple measures

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- Portability of info for mobile students
- Timely feedback
- Younger grade intervention
- Dashboard at early age.

3. What don't you like about these components?

- Caution: as we move forward, don't harm students with over-testing; unnecessary consequences of ill-conceived assessment data.
- Every school needs support for planning for the transition and use of the new standards and assessment system
- The ELL assessments do not provide meaningful instructional interventions
- Requires lots of resources! (Dwindling)
- Assessing so many times, but not using the information for improvements make the system meaningless. Analogy: Weighing the pig without feeding the pig.
- Formative: different teachers have different abilities. PD must be very strong and consistent across districts.
- Do not like the absence of Social Studies from the summative assessment. This is a not so subliminal message about the value, or the lack thereof, of Social Studies in the curriculum. Clearly as important for PWR. (Economic/geographic)...e.g. statutory requirement for American History.
- Dashboard – like parts but clarity needed. Expressed concern about the possibility of tracking, especially as colleges review a student's dashboard.
- Need to find better ways to engage parents and families.
- Not seeing this as stopgap for remediation: need to invest in early remediation
- So many flaws in the whole education system not being addressed – rigor; graduation rates; arcane, archaic and insane grading system.
- Just public schools? What about private schools?
- Content-based assessments can't address innovation, critical thinking, creativity. Expressed interest in integrated assessments.
- Course vs Grade level – probably need both because of different approaches/speeds. This group likes end of course.

4. How can these components enhance student learning & performance?

- Would like to see capstone projects annually, for an assessment score, so students can demonstrate content knowledge and skills in innovative/creative applied ways.
- Teachers need tools and resources to help engage students in the learning process. This can be accomplished through useful formative approaches.
- Aligning all assessments to nationally recognized will assist students.
- Don't see many benefits for students. Concern regarding the alignment of formative/interim/summative. Must avoid the path of least resistance. This kind of system requires a cognitive and cultural shift in thinking among educators.

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- Use dashboard for standards-based reporting system, including formative and interim as “summation”. Don’t waste time creating stuff which won’t survive/help.
- Need systemic interventional system at all levels
- Student learning can occur (feedback should be usable/actionable)
- Will provide information for improvement.
- Must include families/avoid jargon...use visual icons on the dashboard such as a building block image that shows student growth towards mastery.
- Include specific tools for each group with whom you communicate (students, parents, teachers)
- This is resource intensive: please no unfunded mandates!
- Concern regarding what will happen with roll-out of other common core content areas. We need to land on a set of standards and assessments and not keep changing them.
- Question regarding the rigor of the standards. Standards are written to a high level of expectation that ALL students are expected to master; understanding that many students will exceed those expectations in programs such as AP or IB. Concern was expressed about aligning expectations with higher education to continue to reduce the need for remediation. P-12 can’t operate on one set of expectations and higher education setting theirs higher.

5. How will these components help you in your role?

- Districts need to know what to do.
- A Timeline is needed.
- The various components of the system will inform and assist with intervention
- Will support triangulation.
- PWR standards will help support efforts to have students ready to succeed
- Clarity around special populations. Difficult with changing assessments >>> guesswork.
- Early childhood components: clarity of expectations will help with outreach to parents, community
- Legislation to maintain stability once assessments are in place. Assessments should not be re-purposed...e.g. Interim – using results for purposes other than professional development.
- (Museums): Social Studies not being considered. Especially important in Colorado’s growing diversity in the our population. Civic education and process are critical.
- Education reform is huge. Community College system saving students with remediation. Longitudinal system will assist preventatively. Transitional plan should include support for current interventions.
- Social Studies: do not assess summatively statewide – just means more tests; more time; more bureaucracy.