Record of Meeting Minutes

cde Improving Academic Achievement

Date and Time of Meeting:	October 23, 2014 – 1:00-4:00 PM
Reporting:	Margo Allen and Robin Russel
Subject of Meeting:	Graduation Guidelines Assessment Work Group
Facilitator:	Elliott Asp

In Attendance: Elliott Asp, Mike Bowers, Michelle Brownstone, Floyd Cobb, Jonathan Dings, Jeni Gotto, Yu-Lu Hsiung, Ian Macgillivray, Patti Milner, David Platt, Lindsey Prendergast, Mary Ann Roe, Robin Russel, Misti Ruthven, Holly Sample, Chris Selle, Paula Stephenson, Patti Turner, Johan van Nieuwenhuizen, Robert Williams. Guests: Sheila Arredondo (WestEd).

1. Meeting Minutes:

No.	Discussion	Initiator
1	**Overview and Introductions**	Elliott
2	**Guest Speaker: Sheila Arredondo – WestEd** **"College and Career Readiness: Are they equivalent?"** Sheila reviewed a brief history of development of definitions for college and career readiness by giving a national and state-by-state approach to developing these definitions. • **Definitions:** o 1990s – State standards o 2003 – Standards for Success: Definition of "college ready" begins. o 2004 – Achieve, ADP, CCR, o 2006 – ACT (looking for skills that are required to be successful), consider the same skills for college or career o 2010 – ESSA Blueprint ▪ Charge from White House – students need to be college or career ready ▪ 10 states have solid definitions of CCR ▪ Tired of test-based systems (need to do what's best for kids) ▪ If you're only giving tests to meet federal standards, then do the minimum (Elem, MS, HS) o 2012 – Consensus: It is college AND career – See David Conley books (developed performance assessment and added remediation). o 2014 – 37 states with a single CCR definition	Sheila
3	• **Testing Trends:** o 2002 – 2 states EOC (End of Course) as part of system o 2010 – 19 states for EOC o 2014 – 26 states use EOC (10 only EOC, 16 both EOC and Exit Exams) o 2015 – 34 states adopt NEW assessments o Future: 1/3 Comprehensive only; 1/3 EOC only; 1/3 Both • What are "meta" standards that apply to both career and college? • Conley: Four keys to CCR. The same but with nuances. Need some specific organizational knowledge in addition to general knowledge. Different body of knowledge for different careers. • "…at the end of high school, THIS is what we say for all students…" • When career is divided from college, there are equity/opportunity issues. • Most states start with guiding principles/values: o What do we want ALL students to know/do?	Sheila

	… be effective communicators …have a global awareness And, DEPENDING on your pathway… you may need/show other skills. • 2000s – NCLB – **Federal policy can stop innovation.**	
4	**"Defining and Assessing College & Career Readiness"** – handout A handout provided some resources for further information about what was developed and how it was developed. It is still a work in progress. There is work being done to provide a foundation with some standard knowledge and skills needed for both college and career. With these standards, additional requirements for college or for specific careers are needed. • Briefly discussed work by Anne Mishkind and Peter Conforti (1st page of handout) • David Conley is recognized as leading authority on CCR. o David Conley's research provides for four keys to college and career readiness: 1) Key cognitive strategies, 2) key content knowledge, 3) key learning skills and techniques, and 4) key transition knowledge and skills. • Group read pages 4-5, Anne Hyslop's *The Case Against Exit Exams"* and then broke into small groups to discuss their thoughts about that article. o Are there two standards? A higher one for college readiness? We say career AND college, but that's not what's happening. When we use cut scores as a part of requirement, they are naturally diluted for the least common denominator. Still two standards – one for graduation, one for readiness. o Note that there may be unintentional consequences as we raise the rigor of the standards *at the same time* we're using these high stakes standards. o Do we need several different diplomas? o The cut points for TCAP for CCR should have been higher. We are trying to apply old metrics with new expectations. If we elevate the standard, fewer students will be able to hit it. o Need to start in lower grades – too many students are passed from grade to grade and then can't pass the exit exams. o What are we going to use for graduation guidelines? -- *"what is good enough"* versus *"here is just the minimum."* o Higher Ed: We use the diploma as a communications tool – "This is what you need." o For the student that needs the diploma for next job (i.e., ticket to McDonalds), a single bar is too high, so no ticket for whom diploma is the culmination (end point). o What is definition of career (as a sub-set of skills) vs just working? o What is the purpose of a high school diploma? Is it to certify that a student is college and career ready? o How do we manage the political nature connected to education? Can we handle the political whimsy? o cPass (career pathways.us). Goal to have a tool that workforce center would utilize to reflect career readiness. (Should we add to our menu?) URL: CareerPathways.us. o **Elliott: What other ways can kids show that they are CCR? Can we add criteria to the existing menu? How can we motivate kids? What about rural and small districts? Think about adding some additional ways to the menu.**	All
5	**Comments from Sheila** • CO is taking a good first step. A single cut score does not account for skills, or aspirations – it doesn't work. We should be looking for a measure of success – how to perform in life or have economic independence. Colorado is looking for more flexibility. You need a measuring system that is specialized, beyond the cut score, that	Sheila

	makes kids think about a variety of after-high-school pathways.	
6	**Consider Expanding the Menu to Add Local Assessments** • Because Poudre School District has different schools with different needs, a group of teachers took on the task to develop some local assessments. The results were 9 separate tests. • A key issue was to verify the validity of the assessments considering that the teachers involved did not have previous experience with developing assessments or psychometric skills. The task was to model the local assessments against evidence of effectiveness. There were many challenges: Establishing validity (accurately measure the value of the assessment) and reliability, use of subjective or objective grading, does it mean the same thing in different schools or classrooms. It took a lot of time and district manpower to develop. • Do you want to make "local assessments" as part of the menu?	Johan Van Nieuwenhuizen
7	**What is a local assessment?** • Other ways to assess: o Performance-based assessments o Competency-based requirements: i.e., reading and math o Alternative district tests, i.e., MAPS o Teacher-developed body of evidence. Identify the standard, meet that standard. o District Anchor Assessment – content validation o Teacher-developed tests o Annotated student work o Content Collaborative assessments o Need a body of evidence for validity control • DPS develops all assessments in-house with teachers o What kind of capacity do you need to determine if a test is valid? o Great process (tight correlation to state tests) o Deep and rigorous – if you want to learn about it	Elliott
8	**Elliott and next steps** • Assignment: Book: *Standards for Education and Psychological Testing* (published by American Education Research Association, 2014). Elliott will send you pages to read. • **Assignment: From your unique perspective – how do we need to revise the current menu to accommodate your students/issues?** • Assignment: How else could our kids demonstrate CCR? How can we provide flexibility to all districts in Colorado? How does ICAP fit in? Can we add performance tasks – alternate demonstration of competency?	Elliott
9	Meeting ended at 3:30 p.m.	

COLORADO
Department of Education

Vision

All students in Colorado will become educated and productive citizens capable of succeeding in society, the workforce, and life.

Goals

Every student, every step of the way

Meeting Logistics & Desired Outcomes

Meeting:	**Graduation Guidelines Assessment Work Group**				
Date:	**October 23, 2014**	**Time:**	**1:00-4:00 PM**	**Location:**	**Board Room, CDE**
Meeting Lead:	Elliott Asp				
Meeting Participants: *(Who most needs to attend?)*	Members of the Graduation Guidelines Assessment Work Group				
Meeting Objectives: *(Is a meeting necessary to accomplish the objectives?)*	To complete the career and college demonstrations chart outlining the competencies a student must meet or exceed before graduating from high school.				

Agenda Items and Next Steps

Time	Agenda Item	Notes & Next Steps *(be sure to include communication to those not at the meeting who need to know the results)*
1:00 PM	**Introductions and overview – Elliott**	
	College and Career Readiness: Are they equivalent? – Sheila Arredondo	
	Using local assessments – Johan Van Nieuwenhuizen	
	Teacher judgment: Using a body of evidence – Elliott	
	Outline of work for next meetings – Elliott	
	Assignment for next meeting -- Elliott	

Defining and Assessing College & Career Readiness

Selected Definition Resources

Mishkind, Anne. (September 2014). *Overview: State Definitions of College and Career Readiness*. College and Career Readiness and Success Center at AIR.

This overview highlights common elements of state definitions of college and career readiness. A definition of college and career readiness can help build an understanding of the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions of learners who are prepared for postsecondary success.

Key findings include the following:

- 36 states and the District of Columbia have definitions of college and career readiness.
- In 33 of the 37 states with definitions, a single definition is used to describe both college readiness and career readiness.
- In the four states that define college readiness and career readiness separately, most have developed a definition for college or career readiness rather than both.
- 21 states' definitions of "college and career readiness" mention concrete knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students must demonstrate mastery of to be prepared for postsecondary success.

Conforti, Peter A. (May 2013). *What is College and Career Readiness? A Summary of State Definitions*. Pearson Assessment Bulletin, Issue 22.

Although there have been numerous attempts by researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to define what it means to be college and career ready, none of these groups agree exactly on what makes a student equipped for postsecondary life. However, a consensus is emerging: a student is college and career ready when he or she can both enroll in and successfully complete postsecondary collegiate or vocational programs without remedial academic work or assistance (Conley 2012).

In the United States, about 20 percent of states have officially created and adopted definitions of college and career readiness. These states — Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia — collectively define it as encompassing the knowledge, skills, academic preparation, and foundations expected to ensure student success in two- and four-year college credit-bearing courses, without remediation. These courses may lead to a certificate, license, associate's degree, or bachelor's degree, and generally require more rigorous knowledge in English Language Arts.

Conley, David T. (May 2012). *A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness.* Educational Policy Improvement Center.

A student who is ready for college and career can qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses leading to a baccalaureate or certificate, or career pathway-oriented training programs without the need for remedial or developmental coursework. However, not every student requires the same proficiency in all areas. A student's interests and post-high school aspirations influence the precise knowledge and skill profiles necessary to be ready for postsecondary studies.

Four Keys to College and Career Readiness:

- *Key Cognitive Strategies*. The thinking skills students need to learn material at a deeper level and to make connections among subjects.
- *Key Content Knowledge*. The big ideas and organizing concepts of the academic disciplines that help organize all the detailed information and nomenclature that constitute the subject area along with the attitudes students have toward learning content in each subject area.
- *Key Learning Skills and Techniques*. The student ownership of learning that connects motivation, goal setting, self-regulation, metacognition, and persistence combined with specific techniques such as study skills, note taking, and technology capabilities.
- *Key Transition Knowledge and Skills*. The aspiration to attend college, the ability to choose the right college and to apply and secure necessary resources, an understanding of the expectations and norms of postsecondary education, and the capacity to advocate for one's self in a complex institutional context.

Conley, David T. and McGaughy, Charis. (April 2012). College and Career Readiness: Same or Different? *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 69 Issue 7, p. 28.

> *Whether they're headed for college or a career, students need a solid foundation of academic knowledge combined with crucial thinking and learning skills.*

The article discusses the difference between college preparation and job training in U.S. high schools. The authors, educators from the Educational Policy Improvement Center at the University of Oregon, discuss the importance of communications skills, technological proficiency, and problem solving. Polytech High School in Woodside, Delaware and Sammamish Senior High School in Bellevue, Washington are given as examples of mixing college and career education. The authors recommend that secondary schools encourage students to pursue college and careers by raising standards to college entry level or career requirements, partnering with postsecondary schools or local businesses, and providing students with fundamental knowledge and targeting specific skills to each student's interests.

Selected Assessment Resources

Conley, David T. (October 2014). *A New Era for Educational Assessment*. Students at the Center: Deeper Learning Research Series. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

Timeline

1990s States adopt and experiment with performance assessments.

- Vermont and Kentucky require students to collect their best work in "portfolios" to demonstrate their full range of knowledge and skills.
- Maryland introduces performance assessments.
- California implements its California Learning Assessment System (CLAS).
- Oregon creates an elaborate system that includes classroom-based performance tasks, along with certificates of mastery at the ends of grades 10 and 12, requiring what amounts to portfolio evidence that students had mastered a set of content standards.

2000s Shift toward use of standardized tests.

- Federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001) mandates testing in English and mathematics in grades 3–8 and once in high school.
- NCLB technical requirements (as interpreted in 2002 by USED staff) could only be met with standardized tests using selected-response (i.e., multiple-choice) items almost exclusively.
- A few states — notably Maryland, Kentucky, Connecticut, and New York — hold on to performance elements of their tests, but most states retreat from almost all forms other than multiple-choice items and short essays.

2010s States reconsider multiple measures and forms of performance assessment.

Drivers:

- Rising weariness with test-based accountability systems of the type mandated by NCLB.
- Research results clarify what it means to be college and career ready and make it increasingly difficult to defend the argument that NCLB-style tests are predictive of student success.
- Advances in cognitive science yield new insights into how humans organize and use information, which make it equally difficult to defend tests that treat knowledge and skills as nothing more than a collection of discrete bits and pieces.

Examples:

- Career Pathways Collaborative — Colorado, Kansas, Mississippi, and the Center for Education Testing & Evaluation at the University of Kansas, create Career Pathways Assessment System (cPass) to measure high school student readiness for entry into college and/or the workforce.
- New Hampshire introduces a technology portfolio for graduation, which allows students to collect evidence to show how they have met standards in this field.
- New Hampshire's common statewide performance tasks included within a comprehensive state assessment system along with SBAC assessment.
- New York Performance Standards Consortium, more than 40 in-state secondary schools as well as others beyond New York, receives a state-approved waiver allowing its students to complete a graduation portfolio in lieu of some of New York's Regents Examination requirement.

- Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project
- Oregon State Board of Education adopts new diploma requirements specifying that students must demonstrate proficiency in a number of "Essential Skills."
- PARCC and SBAC include performance assessments, in a limited fashion, by requiring students to construct complex written responses to prompts.

Hyslop, Anne. (July 2014). *The Case Against Exit Exams*. New America Foundation.

In the 2013–14 school year, 24 states required students to be proficient on standardized tests in order to graduate from high school. But starting next year, and in the years to come, states will launch more rigorous, college- and career-ready assessments aligned to the Common Core. As they do so, they should revisit the stakes on these tests for students and consider eliminating, or modifying, their exit exam policies.

As states transition to more challenging academic standards — with assessments to match those expectations — exit exams will increasingly place two worthy goals in conflict: motivating students to become college- and career-ready and giving them opportunities to access the world of college and career. In making this choice, "The Case Against Exit Exams" finds that states run the risk of weakening the intent of the Common Core and undermining efforts to increase rigor, build stronger curricula, and authentically evaluate students' postsecondary readiness.

On their own, the college- and career-ready tests only aim to determine who is ready for college. But when used as an exit exam, they could now also determine who is able to go to college by earning a diploma. Because states cannot, and will not, suddenly deny high school degrees to large numbers of students, particularly those who are already at-risk and furthest behind, states will likely dilute the rigor of the college-and career-ready benchmark if meeting that score is tied to graduation requirements.

These policies choices are imminent. "The Case Against Exit Exams" finds that as many as 21 states could continue their exit exams as they implement more challenging assessments, including 10 states that are using the PARCC and Smarter Balanced exams in high schools. The remaining 11 are opting to use tests unique to their states in the near-term, even if they are also governing members in one of the two consortia.

- Exit Exam states planning to use PARCC or Smarter Balanced tests: Connecticut, Idaho, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington
- Exit Exam states planning to use unique state tests: California, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia

The uncertain future of the consortia and/or the exit exam requirement in some states — including Arizona, California, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Tennessee — only amplifies the transition chaos for students and educators as new tests are unveiled. Further, exit exams may be one reason for states' hesitation to adopt new high school tests, based on five state profiles created for the report: the Honor Roll, the Varsity Athletes, the Exchange Students, the Loners, and the Drama Club.

Among states maintaining their high-stakes graduation tests, the report highlights six — Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington — that face the most nuanced and challenging transitions as they seek to maintain continuity in exit exam policies while making changes to the underlying exams. These states are now deploying strategies to minimize the risk to students during the transition to new tests, as well as the risks to the quality of the assessments if the scores are used for graduation decisions. These include phasing in new requirements gradually, only using the results from lower-level subjects as exit exams, and setting two distinct cut scores: one for graduation and a higher one for readiness.

While these strategies are a smart way for states to navigate the transition, the report concludes that states have other options, beyond exit exams, that allow them to pursue the dual goals of higher standards and higher educational attainment without pitting them against one another. For example, states should consider using standardized tests toward final course grades, or placing positive, rather than punitive, stakes on the results, such as automatic placement into credit-bearing courses at public colleges and universities. These policies avoid the costs of exit exams, like higher dropout rates for vulnerable students, without giving up on their benefits, including setting clear standards for high school learning, motivating students to reach higher standards, and providing a clear signal to employers and colleges that graduates possess valuable skills.

Figure 8. End-of-Course Exams vs. Comprehensive College- and Career-Ready Exams

NOW	FUTURE
25 states administer only comprehensive assessments in high school, including college entrance exams like the ACT or SAT, where the state administers them to all students. AK, AZ, CA, CO, CT, ID, IL, IA, KS, ME, MI, MN, MT, NE, NV, NH, ND, OH, OR, RI, SD, VT, WV, WI, WY	18 states plan to administer comprehensive high school assessments, and no state is transitioning to this kind of system. Most of these states are Smarter Balanced members. AK, CA, CT, IA, KS, ME, MI, MN, MT, NE, NH, ND, OR, SD, VT, WV, WI, WY
10 states administer only EOC assessments in high school. IN, MD, MS, MO, NY, OK, PA, TX, UT, VA	18 states plan to administer only EOC exams as their high school assessments. These states are PARCC members or will use their own tests. **AR, AZ, GA,** IN, **IL,** MD, **MA,** MS, **NJ, NM,** NY, **OH,** OK, PA, TX, UT, VA, **WDC**
16 states administer both kinds of assessments, EOC and comprehensive exams in high schools. AL, AR, DE, FL, GA, HI, KY, LA, MA, NJ, NM, NC, SC, TN, WA, WDC	15 states plan to administer both EOC and comprehensive tests. These states represent both consortia and non-consortia members. AL, **CO,** DE, FL, HI, **ID,** KY, LA, **MO, NV,** NC, RI, SC, TN, WA

Note: Bold states are those that plan to change the format of their future high school assessments.

McIntosh, Shelby. (September 2012). *State High School Exit Exams: A Policy in Transition.* Center on Education Policy.

The Center on Education Policy's 11th annual report on state high school exit exams finds that states are embracing higher standards on their exit exams, which means schools and students will feel the impact. The report, based on data collected from state education department personnel in 45 states, discusses the present status of state exit exam policies, the future of these policies as states implement the Common Core State Standards and common assessments, and lessons that can be learned from states' past experiences with implementing new exit exam policies.

Conclusions and Key Findings:

1. Although state policies continue to evolve, high school exit exams remain a substantial force in education policy, currently affecting nearly 7 out of 10 public school students across the nation.
    - 25 states administered exit exams in school year 2011–12.
    - Nearly 7 out of 10 students, and an even larger share of students of color, attend school in states with exit exams.
    - Four states (AL, GA, NC, TN) recently decided to phase out exit exam requirements.
    - End-of-course exams continue to grow in popularity.
    - The percentage of students who pass exit exams on the first try varies by state and by subject but generally ranges from 70% to 90% with few exceptions.
    - All states with exit exams provide students who fail these exams on the first try with opportunities to retake them before the end of 12th grade, and many states offer alternate paths to graduation for students who continue to struggle to pass the exams.
    - States that continue to administer exit exams reported making some policy changes over the past year, such as introducing new exams, setting cut scores to reflect college readiness, and delaying the implementation of new exit exam requirements.

2. Exit exams are becoming assessments of college and career readiness. Many states plan to use the Common Core State Standards, and often the common assessments, as a vehicle for this transition.
    - More states with exit exams are requiring students to pass these exams in an attempt to ensure graduates are prepared for college and careers, among other reasons.
    - Most states with exit exam policies have not yet aligned these exams to what they describe as college- and career-readiness standards, but many are planning to do so.
    - Few states with exit exam policies report that exam scores are used by postsecondary education institutions for admission, placement, or scholarship decisions.
    - Many states with exit exams that have also adopted the CCSS intend to maintain their requirement that students pass exit exams in English language arts and math to receive a high school diploma.
    - Most states with exit exams that have also adopted the CCSS plan to replace their current exit exams in English language arts and math with new assessments aligned to the common standards.
    - A large majority of states that plan to replace their current exams with assessments aligned to the common standards expect their new assessments to be more rigorous than the current ones.

3. Although the success of exit exam policies remains questionable, state policymakers can learn a great deal from states' past experiences with implementing new exit exam policies.
    - States have faced a number of challenges in implementing exit exam policies, including opposition from key education stakeholders, political disagreements or changes in state leadership, legal battles, low student passing rates, and high costs.
    - States have often responded to these challenges by offering alternate routes to graduation or alternate diplomas for some or all students and/or by funding remediation programs for students who struggle to pass exit exams.
    - Even with the introduction of student support services and alternate routes, the impacts of exit exams on student achievement, dropout rates, and other outcomes for historically lower-performing groups are not fully known and have yet to be fully addressed.
    - Successful implementation of a new exit exam policy or changes to an existing policy often depend on states' willingness to take certain actions.
    - Several key questions about the success of exit exam policies remain unresolved.

Domaleski, Christopher. (February 2011). *State End-of-Course Testing Programs: A Policy Brief.* Council of Chief State School Officers.

In recent years the number of states that have adopted or plan to implement end-of-course (EOC) tests as part of their high school assessment program has grown rapidly. As recently as 2002, only two states reported using EOC tests as part of the state assessment system. Today, that number has increased to 19 with another 9 developing EOC tests for future implementation. Additionally, 5 states currently implementing EOC tests are developing new assessments. Clearly, state education leaders view EOC tests as a promising direction for high school assessment.

State policymakers increasingly rely on end-of-course (EOC) tests to support a variety of purposes and uses. Prominent among these uses are accountability initiatives at the student, teacher, and/or school level. Each of these uses connects to a variety of critical issues related to design and implementation and serve as the organizational framework for this document.

Career & College Readiness Demonstrations

- **Menu will evolve over time**

DEV= in development

Demonstration	English	Math	Science	Social Studies
TCAP (2013-14 only)	663	627		
CMAS (2013-14 +)			TBD	TBD
PARCC (2014-15 +)	4 +	4 +		
ACT	18	19	TBD	-
SAT	430	460	-	-
IB	3 +	3 +	3 +	3 +
AP	3 +	3 +	3 +	3 +
ASVAB	50	50	50 *	-
Capstone (2015-16 +)	DEV	DEV	DEV	DEV
Concurrent Enrollment	C- or better	C- or better	C- or better	C- or better
Industry Certificate	DEV	DEV	DEV	DEV

*** Added**

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