

## **Colorado Content Collaboratives**

**February 29 and March 1, 2012**

**Grand Junction, CO**

### **Session Summary**

#### **Goals of the Meeting**

- ◆ Meet the researchers and learn the context of their findings
- ◆ Clarify the Assessment Review Tool
- ◆ Begin Reviewing Researchers' Findings
- ◆ Identify Gaps
- ◆ Begin Discussion Possibilities for Filling Those Gaps

#### **Session Overview/Updates**

The meetings began with an agenda review highlighting the major activities over the two days. Emphasis was placed on beginning the process of reviewing assessments presented by the researchers, and the initial application of the Assessment Review tool. Collaborative members were then updated on the initial meeting of the Technical Steering committee (see notes on Collaborative website). Finally, the results of the survey conducted following the first meetings in Denver on February 1 & 2, 2012 were discussed, along with answers to key questions raised in the survey.

#### **Researchers Presentation of Assessments**

Content area experts were selected to research, identify, and present a set of assessments for consideration by the Content Collaboratives for possible inclusion in the Resource Bank for each content area. A variety of assessment instruments were presented in each content area that provided a range of assessment modalities, i.e. constructed response, multiple choice, performance tasks, etc., and a range of levels, i.e. primary, intermediate, and secondary (both middle and high school). Each researcher in attendance took approximately ten minutes to present their overall approach and to highlight key findings and/or trends that were

representative of their work, followed by questions from the participants (Note: Dr. Karin Hess was unable to attend Day One but was with the Reading, Writing, and Communicating Collaborative on Day Two). The researchers are:

Dance—Susan McGreevy-Nichols, Senior Partner, The Griffin Center for Inspired Instruction

Drama & Theatre Arts—Dr. Mary Schuttler, Director of Theatre Education, University of Colorado College of Performing and Visual Arts

Music—Dr. Mark Hudson, Music Department Chair, Colorado State University at Pueblo

Reading, Writing, & Communicating—Dr. Karin Hess, Senior Associate, Center of Assessment

Social Studies—Dr. Beth Ratway, Senior Consultant, American Institutes for Research

Visual Arts—Dr. Frank S. Philip, Independent Researcher and Consultant, Audience Focus

### **Familiarization and Initial Review of the Assessments**

Meeting in their own spaces on the afternoon of Day One with the support of their facilitators and researchers, each collaborative began the processes of reviewing the assessments to 1) become familiar with what has been presented for their content area, 2) explore and understand more deeply the work done by their researcher, 3) conduct an initial sort of the assessments prior to application of the Assessment Review Tool and 4) begin applying the Review Tool to specific assessments. Dr. Jeri Thompson from the Center for Assessment presented the revised Assessment Review Tool on the morning of Day Two. She then spent time throughout the day with each collaborative providing assistance in use of the tool.

The following are summaries of the activities for each Collaborative over the course of the two day meeting.

#### **Social Studies**

##### **Day One**

On the afternoon of Day One, the Social studies Collaborative worked with researcher Beth Ratway as she walked the members through an overview of all of the assessments she had put forward for consideration. The Collaborative discussed advantages/disadvantages of each of the sets of assessments: international, national and state assessments. The International set of assessments was mostly backed by a very supportive system wide structure such as panels in the UK. National assessments have a great deal of use and therefore high reliability and

validity. State level assessments have many pro and cons but there seems to be more multiple choice options with many fewer constructed responses. Dr. Ratway walked the members through the step-by-step process she used to make decisions about which assessments to include in her report.

The group then divided into grade band groups (elementary, middle and high school) to review the assessments brought forward by Dr. Ratway. The small groups made decisions about which assessments held the most promise and identified them as assessments that would be eligible for comprehensive review on Day Two.

#### Day Two

Starting Day Two, the Collaborative members discussed how to organize themselves for the next level of scrutiny. It was decided to form groups of three members: two high school groups, two middle school groups and one elementary group. Each group then worked through the assessments in two rounds for the remainder of the day.

### **Reading, Writing and Communicating**

#### Day One

Since researcher Dr. Karin Hess was not able to be part of the panel during the morning, we spent some time preparing for her work with the group on the following day. We began with looking at a PowerPoint Dr. Hess sent in advance to familiarize the collaborative with her thinking in selecting the assessments. She also described the additional information that was posted on the Wiki for Collaborative members to review.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent with members familiarizing themselves with the assessments. In order to be most productive, the Collaborative divided into subgroups according to the level designations that Dr. Hess had used – grades Preschool through two, three through eight, and nine through twelve.

#### Day Two

Researcher, Dr. Karin Hess joined the group this second morning and led the group through a highly engaging conversation regarding her work in identifying assessments. The group then committed to spending time applying the Assessment Review Tool so that we could offer feedback about its use. The subgroup configuration was explained to Dr. Hess and she then assisted with the process of determining which assessments to begin using the Assessment Review tool. In addition, Dr. Hess spent time with each subgroup answering questions and

offering support as the groups worked. Each group designated a recorder to complete the tool as they worked through it.

## **The Arts—Music, Visual, Dance, Theatre**

### **Day One**

Each discipline specific collaborative gathered in the afternoon with their respective researcher to discuss the researcher's methodology and to get more information about how the assessments were identified and selected. These conversations proved to be most helpful, given that a number of Collaborative members brought additional assessments to look at. The members were also impressed with the use of both domestic and international rubrics

### **Day Two**

The focus of Day Two was on the use of the Assessment Review Tool on selected assessments discussed on Day One with the Researchers. All but the dance collaborative divided into subgroups within their disciplines divided by grade levels. The music group downloaded music to better understand how some of the performance measures might be utilized in the assessments. Unique to the Arts Collaborative is the impact that copyright laws could have on district assessments (if a song, dance, or performance was used requiring permission), as well as the need to have "low tech" assessments for those districts that may not have high speed internet capabilities. While all disciplines made significant progress on the evaluating the potential assessments, all of the groups require further time to review the assessments and/or discuss the gaps.