



Assessments Aligned to the Common Core State Standards *An IDEA Partnership Collection*

Needs of the Field

When stakeholders from an array of roles were asked “What is the state of current practice around development and implementation of assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards?” they replied:

1. What is the vision for development and implementation of general and alternative assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards?
 - High expectations for everyone
 - Students can demonstrate academic and higher order thinking skills (problem solving, communication, interpersonal skills, time management, employability, etc.)
 - All youth are engaged in meaningful active learning school experiences that result in successful school and post school outcomes. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is employed within the learning and assessment process
 - A comprehensive and coordinated system of professional development, services and supports is essential
 - All youth are working and developing to their greatest potential within an integrated, seamless lifelong system of services
 - All youth have their unique needs met and have the opportunity to be productive citizens, have choice about their outcomes, and have full access to and are involved in the community
 - The assessment process should be for both the sake of assessment as well as for instruction
 - Research on brain development should be taken into consideration in the development and implementation of assessments
 - All youth are involved in relevant and rigorous preparation activities that focus on 21st Century skills
 - Fully engage all communities of expertise and stakeholder organizations, including career technical organizations, in the development, dissemination, and implementation of the assessments
 - All youth are educated and assessed in a safe, supportive, and caring environment to make them feel connected and supported
 - The school environment and expectations are developmentally appropriate and staff is supported through professional development
 - Learning is personalized for all youth based on data-driven decision-making
 - Professional development/training, including parents, is provided to keep people knowledgeable and informed
 - We use the outcomes of assessment in positive ways to build educational communities
 - A flexible system that includes valid and reliable formative and summative assessment which informs decision making

2. What is current practice in assessment of learning standards?
 - There are pockets of excellence and passion worthy of replication
 - Fragmented systems exist where students often drop through the cracks
 - Current practices are not always evidence-based
 - We struggle to provide adequate time to implement effective interventions, assessments, and to see the desired results



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- There is a lack of holistic approach to transition
 - There is a limited focus on social/emotional/behavioral learning and brain research
 - High expectations are not expected of all students
 - Technology challenges exist in availability and levels of expertise
 - Disjointed assessment practices with mixed success are commonplace
 - There is limited recognition that assessment and services that support instruction can take place in many settings
 - Availability of funding, services, and resources is localized
 - There is an emphasis on compliance rather than program improvement
 - There is a lack of stakeholder involvement in the development and delivery of assessments and professional development
 - There is little time in the school schedule for collaboration around instruction, assessment, and transition
 - Family engagement is critical but does not always occur in determining what a child knows
 - Lack of curriculum integration and collaboration across subjects
 - Need to consider the Individual Transition Plan in any assessment process
 - We are losing the individualization that we strive for with IDEA. We need to consider what the child needs to know (meaningful outcomes) in order for them to live independently
3. What are the gaps between current assessment practice and the new general/alternative assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards?
- Availability of culturally competent assessment and instruction
 - Funding and resource allocation is variable
 - Training and professional practice is often disconnected
 - Need to consider designing more authentic assessments
 - Professional practice gaps
 - Still viewing family involvement in traditional ways
 - Silos and territoriality still exist
 - Building relationship development skills of professionals
 - Pre-service education needs to adequately address assessment
 - How to meet and serve needs of those with differing disabilities and abilities and measure progress
 - How to raise minimal compliance to best practice for all youth
 - Lack of common shared language on assessment across stakeholders and agencies
 - Coaching and mentoring are needed/data based practices
 - Increased understanding between education, business, community, vocational rehabilitation and other service providers on assessment
 - Need to resurface resources that already exist
 - Availability and use of technology
 - Training for all stakeholders; need to find time and opportunities
 - How to address all areas of assessment and instructional decision making
 - Assessments that assist with planning
 - Strategies to support and assess social skill development



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- Tools to assess students with significant and multiple disabilities and the professionals to conduct and interpret the assessments, as well as universal screening
4. What skills, information, and processes need to be in place for the effective implementation of the general/alternative assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards?
- Continuity between systems
 - Encouraging and supporting networks between and among programs, grade levels, schools
 - Support access to assessment resources
 - System that facilitates communication, collaboration, and planning for reform and improvement
 - Assessment not just of academics
 - Restructuring of school day to foster collaboration, professional development, and changes in children's routines
 - Integrative data systems
 - Ensuring fidelity of implementation and accountability
 - Scaling-up best practices and implementation across states
 - Alignment of policy and practice
 - Embracing change
 - Strengths-based models and approaches to working with families, children, and service providers
 - Common language across discipline, age spans, and agencies
 - Bring decision makers to the table early
 - Encourage communities of practice among agencies; federal, state, local levels
 - Work to infuse transition into the curriculum and assessments at both the pre-service and in-service levels
 - Professional development and services across agencies, services, and providers
 - Encourage flexible support systems
 - Collaboration and shared decision-making
 - Engagement of the entire community
 - High expectations
 - Focus on national core standards and personalized goals (CCSSO & National Governors' Association)
 - Family involvement and empowerment
 - Emphasis on cultural differences

This document was generated within the IDEA Partnership by cross-stakeholders representing teachers, administrators, related service personnel, family members and youth, state education agencies, higher education, technical assistance providers, and assessment consortia.