

Executive Summary: ENRICHING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS THROUGH QUALITY PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT



The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) is committed to ensuring that all of its graduating students are college and career-ready. The NH State Board of Education Rules requiring that all high school courses be aligned to course-level competencies is one step the state has already taken to foster new practices of assessment that promote and assess deeper levels of understanding, important academic content, skills, and dispositions. To support this goal, the state will integrate performance assessments into its state assessment and accountability systems to support student learning of rigorous academic content, skills, and dispositions.

"Accountability has increased at all levels. There is an expectation to have a results-oriented process in place that is comprehensive yet achievable, as well as being meaningful to students, educators, parents, and the whole learning community." ~HS Leadership Report NHDoe 2006

In partnership with the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE) and the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), the New Hampshire Department of Education is developing a state-wide performance assessment system that will balance local control with state-wide accountability and comparability. This will be one component of a comprehensive assessment system for New Hampshire students, which will eventually include Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments as well as other measures. In launching this effort, the NHDOE will apply the lessons learned from past local and performance assessment initiatives.

As part of the Flexibility Waiver Request under NCLB, NHDOE has proposed to phase-in common performance assessments as a component of the assessment information that will be used, along with consortium-based and state assessments, to make school accountability determinations in the state's school accountability system.

The proposed performance assessment system will be based on:

1. competencies that provide state-defined learning expectations of the most important knowledge and skills,
2. a focus on technical quality to ensure that the performance tasks that are designed and implemented at the local and state levels are valid and reliable, and
3. a robust professional development model that provides support to educators in designing, implementing, and reliably scoring quality performance tasks.

Over the next two years, beginning with mathematics and English language arts (ELA), the New Hampshire Department of Education will develop, through discipline-based practitioner committees and expertise from NCIEA, common statewide competencies, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, in the major academic disciplines (ELA, mathematics, science, social studies/history, arts). The competencies will be aligned with college and career-ready standards at the appropriate depth of knowledge, with the performance tasks to be designed reflecting higher order thinking. While the competencies represent content-specific concepts and skills, they are organized in a manner to encourage cross-disciplinary learning, teaching, and assessment. ELA and math were completed and approved by the State Board of Education in FY 2013, while science, social studies, and arts will be completed in FY 2014. Upon completion, the competencies will be brought to the New Hampshire State Board of Education for adoption. These system-level CCSS-aligned competencies in ELA and math are not meant to take the place of local course-level competencies. Local course-level competencies and the New Hampshire CCSS-aligned competencies will support and enrich each other.

The next generation of New Hampshire's assessment system is based upon the following foundational principles:



1. New Hampshire's educational system should provide students with real opportunities to learn the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for all students to graduate from High School college-and-career ready, pursue meaningful post-secondary options and to become productive citizens of New Hampshire and the world.

2. New Hampshire's student assessment system should promote and measure the knowledge, skills, and dispositions in ways that provide feedback for improvement of student and system learning.

- 3. Performance assessments are a vehicle for encouraging the teaching and learning of meaningful content and skills**
- 4. New Hampshire's system of educator support should build the capacity of educators to engage students in the learning of meaningful knowledge and skills**
- 5. Accountability systems, including educator evaluation systems, should be built upon a foundation of a student assessment system that measures critically important student outcomes.**

A common statewide definition will promote greater consistency in the quality of local and common performance assessments developed and will serve as a basis for more elaborated definitions of technical quality. This common definition is not meant to stifle local initiatives and creativity; rather, it will serve as a basis for evaluating the quality of local adaptations as well as for implementing state-wide professional development activities.

Common statewide definition of performance assessments:

Multi-step, complex activities with clear criteria, expectations, and processes that enable students to interact with meaningful content and that measure the depth at which students learn content and apply complex skills to create or refine an original product and/or solution.

Common statewide definition of CCSS-aligned competencies:

Targets for student learning representing key content-specific concepts and skills applied within or across content domains.

This system will eventually include a set of common performance assessments that have high technical quality in the core academic subjects (English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts), locally designed assessments with guidelines for ensuring high technical quality, regional scoring sessions and local district peer review audits to ensure sound accountability systems and high inter-rater reliability, a web-based bank of local and common performance assessments, and a network of practitioner "assessment experts" to support districts and schools.

Districts and schools will receive substantial professional development and support to develop and implement robust performance assessment systems. A teacher-friendly field guide for administering the common performance assessment (PA) tasks as well as designing and implementing local performance tasks will be developed for districts and be available in both electronic and hard-copy.

Our goal continues to be that each student will graduate from high school with both the rigorous content knowledge and the higher order skills necessary for success in college and career, and for our state-wide assessment system to reflect and value schools and students meeting those expectations, while continuing to honor New Hampshire's local control educational system. We are confident that these efforts will result in a comprehensive system of local course competencies, CCSS-aligned competencies, and powerful assessment practices.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

<p><u>By September 30, 2013</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State-wide ELA and math competencies completed and approved by the New Hampshire Board of Education ▪ State-wide competency committees for science, social studies, and arts selected for start-up in fall 2013 ▪ Cohort 1 of up to 15 high schools have completed a school year of professional development on designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance assessment tasks ▪ An initial set of common high school performance tasks in ELA and math selected and refined for field testing in 2013-2014 ▪ A website for storing validated common and local performance tasks created and launched, and an initial set of local performance tasks selected for further refinement and validation ▪ A cadre of Cohort 1 assessment experts selected, provided initial training, and provided stipends to support districts and schools on designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance tasks 	<p><u>By September 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State-wide science, social studies, and arts competencies completed and approved by the New Hampshire State Board of Education ▪ Cohort 2 of up to 20 high schools and Cohort 3 of up to 20 K-8 schools completed a school year of professional development on designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance assessment tasks ▪ A full set of validated common performance tasks in high school ELA and math uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ An initial set of common high school performance tasks in science, social studies, and arts selected and refined from Cohort 1 & 2 high schools, and ready for field testing in 2014-2015 ▪ An initial set of common K-8 performance tasks in ELA and math selected and refined from Cohort 1 & 2 high schools, and ready for field testing in 2014-2015 ▪ Local performance tasks at all grade spans selected, validated, and uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ A second cadre of assessment experts selected, trained, and provided stipends to support districts and schools in designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance tasks ▪ A voluntary performance assessment peer review audit system designed and approved, and implemented for selected districts
<p><u>By September 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cohort 4 of up to 20 high schools and two Cohorts (5 & 6) of up to 20 K-8 schools completed a school year of professional development on designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance assessment tasks ▪ A full set of common performance tasks in high school science, social studies, and arts developed, validated, and uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ A full set of common K-8 performance tasks in ELA and math developed, validated, and uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ An initial set of common K-8 performance tasks in science, social studies, and arts selected and refined for field testing in 2015-2016 ▪ Local performance tasks at all grade spans selected, validated, and uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ The two cadres of assessment experts continue to receive support to assist districts and schools in designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance tasks ▪ The first cycle of formative peer reviews conducted, with the process fine-tuned for subsequent cycles 	<p><u>By June 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three Cohort s (7, 8 & 9) of up to 20 K-8 schools each and one HS Cohort completed a school year of professional development on designing, implementing, and scoring quality common and local performance assessment tasks ▪ A full set of common performance tasks in K-8 science, social studies, and the arts developed, validated, and uploaded to the state performance assessment website ▪ The performance assessment website will have a rich collection of validated local performance tasks in each grade span and discipline ▪ The first formal cycle of peer review audits completed

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