Wyoming's Statewide Assessment System: Recommendations from the Specialty Assessment Committees

September 2016

WYOMING
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

In 2015, the Wyoming Legislature directed the State Board of Education to convene an Assessment Task Force to make recommendations for the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System. In a report dated October 15, 2015, *Wyoming's Statewide Assessment System: Recommendations from the Wyoming Assessment Task Force*, the Task Force made recommendations, including specialty assessment committees be convened in order to address assessments for subgroups of students. Task Force members identified the need to convene specialty committees due to time constraints that did not allow them to adequately address recommendations for assessment in the following areas: alternates for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, career and technical education; early literacy and kindergarten–grade 2 (K–2); and English language proficiency. Moreover, members of the Task Force believed additional expertise of education specialists was needed to adequately represent and address the needs of these unique populations of students. As a result of the Task Force's recommendation to convene specialty assessment committees, the Wyoming Legislature passed *House Bill 0019, Enrolled Act No. 55*, which states:

> Section 5.
>
> (a) The state board of education, through the state superintendent, shall convene committees of assessment specialists, including district personnel, as necessary, to review the recommendations contained in the report submitted by the assessment task force pursuant to 2015 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 179, Section 6.
>
> (b) The committees shall determine the appropriate application or modification of the recommendations contained in the report regarding specialty assessments, including but not limited to alternative assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, English language proficiency assessments, early literacy assessments, career technical, and kindergarten through grade two (2) education assessments.

The objective of this legislation was for educators with experience working in these areas to collectively review the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System Task Force recommendations as they related to the specialty assessments for their respective student populations. The committees made decisions by consensus as to the purpose of each special population assessment, reviewing recommendations detailed in the Task Force report.

COMMITTEE SELECTION AND ENGAGEMENT

As Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) assessment staff prepared to recruit specialty assessment committee members, an overlap of committee members for the Early Literacy and K-2 assessments was identified. Due to similarities in content, one committee was recruited to make recommendations for both the early literacy and K-2 assessments. In April 2016, the WDE sent Memorandum to Superintendents No. 2016-072, to recruit specialty assessment committee members. Educators from schools, districts, higher education institutions, and other service providers expressed interest and committees were formed representing each group of stakeholders. The North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL supported the facilitation and synthesis of consensus decisions made in each of the stakeholder groups

Each specialty assessment committee held an initial face-to-face meeting where members identified the highest-priority purpose of assessments for their respective population of students and began the process of reviewing recommendations and making consensus decisions. The meetings took place at the end of May and early June, and each committee participated in one or more virtual follow-up meetings in addition to providing written feedback on drafts of their recommendations. Dates of all meetings are detailed in the committee sections of this report. The recruitment of committee members, the decision making process, and meeting formats promoted stakeholder engagement and ensured recommendations accurately represented the views of all committee members.

SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the recommendations that were reviewed by each specialty assessment committee. Recommendations, in their entirety, from the Statewide Assessment System Task Force can be found in the *Wyoming Statewide Assessment System: Recommendations from the Wyoming Assessment Task Force* report dated October 15, 2015.

I. Classroom Formative Assessment

The Task Force recommended that classroom formative assessments not be included in the state's comprehensive assessment system used for state and federal accountability. The Task Force, however, acknowledged the state and districts (perhaps organized regionally) could partner in providing high-quality professional development to support high-quality local formative assessment practices.

II. District Assessment System

Task Force members recognized the need for consistency in quality and alignment of district assessments to the state assessment. To address these needs, the Task Force recommended the state consider contracting with qualified professionals to conduct reviews of districts' assessment systems as part of the accreditation process, and support collaborative efforts among districts (as noted above) to improve the quality of locally developed assessments and data used to inform educational decisions. Additionally, the Task Force recommended not using district assessment results as indicators in the state's accountability system.

III. State-Provided Interim Assessment

i. Governing Principles

To ensure alignment of the statewide assessment system, the Task Force recommended that interim assessments be optional and tied to the state summative assessment by measuring the same content standards, use the same type and format of questions, and be procured as part of the summative assessment to ensure coherence. They further recommended the state provide the interim assessment at no cost; however, if a district chooses to use a different assessment, it would do so at its own expense.

ii. Two "Flavors" of Interim Assessment

The Task Force recommended the state procure two basic forms of interim assessments--a "mini-summative" version that is representative of the summative assessment blueprint in terms of topics covered and item type, and a module-based version in which the summative assessment blueprint is split into subsets of content categories (called "domains" in Wyoming).

iii. Item and Task Types

The Task Force recommended the interim and summative assessments be aligned to the depth and breadth of Wyoming's state content standards, combining multiple choice items with other item types such as short- or extended- constructed response and/or performance tasks in order to measure more complex knowledge and skills. Members recognized the need for results from the interims to be provided as soon as practicable, so a combination of local and vendor-scored items may be required.

IV. State Summative Assessment

i. Governing Principles

The Task Force recommended that the technical quality of assessments be well-documented according to research and/or best practices, including alignment to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.

ii. Avoiding an Exclusive Wyoming Assessment

Recognizing that improved technical quality of assessments, comparison of results, reduced costs, and test stability can be achieved through the increased capacity and expertise by collaboration among multiple states, the Task Force recommended that each content area test be used in at least one other state. This would also likely foster stability in the system as well, a feature that members strongly desired.

iii. Standards-Based Assessment vs. College/Career Entrance Assessment

To allow students in grades 11 and 12 freedom to pursue individualized pathways, the Task Force recommended that standards-based summative assessments be administered to students through grade 10. Therefore, grades 11 and 12 should be reserved for students to take college entrance, work skills, CTE, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate assessments enabling students to individualize pathways through CTE or college preparation programs.

The Task Force further recommended that students in grades 11 take either a college entrance or career readiness examination and assessment results for students in grades 11 and 12 be included only as a "readiness indicator" in the state's accountability system. The Task Force recommended WDE be provided with funding to support individualized high-school pathways for students. Additionally, the Task Force requested the Legislature and the Hathaway Advisory Committee investigate using grade 10 assessments for Hathaway scholarship eligibility purposes.

iv. Alignment to the Wyoming State Standards

The Task Force recommended the grade 3-10 assessments be aligned to the full depth and breadth of Wyoming's state content standards. This means the assessment would necessarily contain multiple items types, including multiple

choice items and, for more complex knowledge and skills, using other item types such as short- or extended- constructed response and/or performance tasks. The Task Force emphasized that inclusion of these items must not compromise overall limits on testing time.

v. Content Coverage

The Task Force recommended English language arts and mathematics be assessed in every grade (3-10), and include an assessment of writing and science at least once in each grade span, elementary, middle, and high.

To identify content for grade 9 and 10 assessments, the Task Force recommended WDE convene a standards review committee of middle and high school teachers, content specialists, district curriculum directors, and higher education representatives.

vi. Testing Time

The Task Force recommended actual testing time for state-required summative assessments be limited to one percent of the required instructional time for a given grade level. Actual testing time means the time students are actually responding to assessment. Actual testing time should be based on the estimated time needed for 85 percent of students to complete the test.

vii. Test Timing and Test Windows

The Task Force recommended that testing occur during the same three- to four-week testing window for each grade level and conclude at the end of first full week of May. WDE should permit stakeholders to address local needs for flexibility within the window. The Task Force further recommended all aggregate reports be available by August 1st to facilitate school improvement activities.

viii. Moving Assessment Online

The Task Force recommended that test administration be moved online by spring 2018, to expedite return of assessment results and the use of data in school improvement activities. Additional safeguards were recommended to ensure successful transition to an online assessment by the spring of 2018.

ix. Claims to Be Supported for Individual Students

The Task Force recommended that the assessment must support claims for each individual student that include how each student achieves relative to Wyoming standards and year-to-year growth compared to peers.

x. Claims to Be Supported for Classrooms, Schools, Districts, and the State

The Task Force recommended that the assessment must produce valid and reliable group reports that support the magnitude of achievement and growth gaps for key demographic groups (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged,

students with disabilities, and English learners), the change in achievement and growth gaps over time, the percentage of Wyoming students meeting proficiency targets and growth gaps to achieve/remain proficient.

xi. Reporting

The Task Force recommended a robust reporting system be designed to meet the needs of school and district staff, parents and students, as well as others in the community.

Additionally, the format and elements of each report should be determined by conducting focus groups and/or multiple rounds of workshops including representatives of each stakeholder group.

xii. Wyoming Educator Participation in Ongoing Development

To ensure Wyoming educators have the opportunity to be involved in ongoing development of assessments, the Task Force recommended WDE define and oversee Wyoming educator involvement in activities such as test item reviews, range finding, and human scoring of responses.

xiii. Test Security

The Task Force recommended WDE review its existing policy documents associated with training and industry standards on test security to ensure clear policies, protocols, and guidelines are comprehensive. It was further recommended that WDE's test administration vendor must assist with test security to supplement the efforts of the WDE.

xiv. Data Security and Privacy

The Task Force recommended that the vendor must provide documentation of compliance to state and federal student privacy laws and further ensure its corporate policies are strictly enforced and adequate to prevent data security breaches.

xv. Program Evaluation and Its Relationship with System Stability

The Task Force recommended WDE contract for an independent evaluation to determine if the intended outcomes of the state summative assessment have been realized after five years of implementation. They further recommended WDE convene a statewide assessment policy advisory committee (PAC) to monitor for concerns of Wyoming education stakeholders, and identify thresholds for recommending changes to the system.

xvi. Specialty Assessments

As previously described, the Task Force recommended convening specialty assessment committees to make recommendations for assessments for early literacy and students in grades K-2, students with significant cognitive disabilities, English language learners, and students enrolled in career and technical education programs.

V. Recommendation for Policy Coherence

The Task Force recommended the Legislature:

i. Create statutes to set broad goals and articulate the intended use of assessments, rather than add specific assessment requirements or name specific assessment products or requirements that point to specific vendors or products.

ii. Prioritize creating a coherent, comprehensive, and efficient assessment system designed to measure student learning and support school improvement.

iii. Evaluate, with a broad cross section of education stakeholders, the need for expanding or disrupting the current assessment system.

With the recommended framework, the Task Force identified several Wyoming state statues needing amendment or repeal which are detailed in the full report.

VI. Recommended Variance in Standard Wyoming Procurement Practice

To maximize the stability of the state assessment system over time, the Task force recommended the Legislature direct Wyoming procurement officials to grant a variance from standard procurement practice to permit contracts for extended length of time to promote continuity and consistency in the assessment system.

SPECIALTY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Alternate Assessment

The Alternate Assessment Specialty Committee met in Casper on June 2, 2016, followed by one virtual session on August 12, to make recommendations for the alternate assessment as part of the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System. Committee members identified priorities for assessments to meet the unique needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities as they evaluated the recommendations of the Wyoming Statewide Assessment Task Force. In between the face-to-face and virtual discussions, committee members reviewed drafts of their recommendations and provided written feedback which is reflected in their final recommendations.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in Wyoming currently take the Wy-ALT (Wyoming Alternate Assessment) which has been administered since the 2014-2015 academic year. Considerable discussion among committee members focused on the purpose of the Wy-ALT and initially, the committee thought assessing students' "functional performance" was a necessary part of the assessment system for students with the most significant cognitive difficulties. However, since neither the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) nor Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require this type of assessment, WDE personnel clarified that the "functional performance" will not be assessed as a component of the state's summative or interim assessment system. The committee concluded that functional performance of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities would be most appropriately assessed through local assessments.

Committee members discussed the overall purpose of statewide assessment for students in this population. Emphasizing the need for the assessments to be developmentally appropriate, members acknowledged the primary purpose is to provide performance information so that all students are included in the accountability system. They also expressed the belief that more consistency in identifying students for participation in the alternate assessment is necessary, and that the WDE should continue to monitor participation in the alternate assessment.

Participants generally agreed with the framework adopted for the general assessment as previously described, including fundamental tenets like alignment to the state's adopted content standards extensions and comparability with other states. However, there were a few exceptions. The first relates to testing time. The committee members expressed the need to capture the total time spent on administering the alternate assessment because it represents a loss of instruction time for other students. Therefore, the committee further recommended the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) conduct a study in the spring of 2017 to determine the range of teacher time spent on the following activities:

i. Preparing for administering the alternate assessment

ii. Administering the assessment to students

iii. Post-assessment activities such as score entry

Noting that the current alternate assessment involves far less burden on school staff than its predecessor, members recommended that the study include an examination of the burden placed on districts, including the need for substitute teachers, and it should include teachers at all levels—elementary, middle, and high school. The results of the study would enable the WDE to provide a more detailed or precise recommendation for the testing time required for all teachers to administer the alternate assessment.

Unlike the Task Force, the Alternate Assessment Specialty Committee did not recommend including an integrated interim assessment system as a component of the state's alternate assessment system. They observed that large scale assessment of this population is challenging, and adding assessments is not likely to support program improvement or be beneficial for students or to.

While the Task Force recommended moving to testing online, the alternate assessment group did not recommend moving to online only assessment. The committee recognized that, to accommodate the unique needs of each student, flexibility of administration options is needed (which would include the option of online administration). Committee members did note that online assessment may be more engaging for some students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The committee recommended, therefore, that the state retain the current practice of administering the alternate assessment with recording responses online, and investigate options for a variety of administration modes in order to best match students' ability to respond.

Related to reporting, the committee recommended limiting the claims to overall proficiency within a content area rather than reporting detail at the domain (e.g. geometry) level given the number of items on the assessment. As with the general assessment, they endorsed the idea of meaningful use of data. They also observed that, given the low incidence of students taking the alternate assessment, aggregate reporting of alternate assessment results at the school and district level are not meaningful. Wherever possible, proficiency of Wy-ALT participants should be included in overall school proficiency rate reporting instead. This will ensure confidentiality of student data as required under FERPA.

II. English Language Proficiency Assessment

The English Language Proficiency Specialty Assessment Committee met in Casper on June 2, 2016, followed by one virtual session on July 21, to make recommendations for the English language proficiency (ELP) assessment as part of the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System. Committee members identified priorities for assessments to meet the unique needs of students who are English language learners. In between the face-to-face and virtual discussions, committee members reviewed drafts of their recommendations and provided written feedback which is reflected in their final recommendations.

In 2009, Wyoming joined the WIDA Consortium. This consortium provides the ACCESS for ELLs assessment annually, a test designed to assess students' English language proficiency in the domains of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The Committee recommended Wyoming continue its participation in the WIDA Consortium and use of ACCESS for ELLs. Considerable, high quality professional development has been provided throughout the state on the WIDA standards, which serve as the foundation for the assessment.

The committee discussed the changing role the ELP assessment plays in accountability, and they noted how ELP is highlighted in school accountability with the reauthorization of ESEA. Within schools, however, the assessment results are used to inform instruction, via placing students in English language development programs and creating roadmaps for students to develop their skills in English. It's also used to help establish high expectations for students and the programs that serve them. The ELP screener identifies students as English learners, and data from the ELP assessment assists school staff in monitoring students' growth in English acquisition. Finally, given that the assessment is used in multiple states, it permits cross-state and cross-district comparisons.

The English Language Proficiency Specialty Assessment Committee agreed to the application of much of the Task Force framework to the ELP assessments. Specifically, they agreed the ELP assessment should be based on a set of standards (specifically, the WIDA English Language Development Standards). They noted that the 2016 administration of ACCESS was largely online and given the relative successful administration, they support continued implementation online. In terms of reporting, they believe the ELP reporting system should provide information at the domain level for individual students, their families, and for school staff.

The Committee discussed the testing window for the ELP assessment. Currently, the window opens in late January and closes in the last week of February. Members noted that this window is acceptable since it does not overlap with the windows for the spring achievement testing. They had no particular recommendations for policy changes since the ELP assessment requirements are largely dictated by federal statutes and regulations. Given the nature of the ELP assessment, the Committee recommended that the time spent

by English learners in the ELP assessment not be included in the 1% cap for total testing time. While they noted that the 1% cap is appropriate, they believe it was intended to address statewide academic achievement testing, not ELP assessments.

The Committee also discussed participation of English learners in the academic achievement assessments required in state and federal law. The Committee highlighted the importance for the state's summative and interim assessments to be made available to English-language learners in multiple languages (in science and math), and that appropriate accommodations be made readily available (e.g. glossaries and other supports). They also discussed the ongoing importance of permitting exemptions for English learners who have been in U.S. schools for less than 12 months. While current practice permits exemptions in English language arts and reading, the Committee recommended expanding the exemption to both math and science for newly arrived English learners.

III. Career Technical Education Assessments

The Career Technical Education (CTE) Specialty Assessment Committee met in Casper on June 2, 2016, followed by two virtual sessions on July 7 and August 9, to make recommendations for the CTE assessments in Wyoming. Committee members identified priorities for assessments to meet the needs of students who are enrolled in CTE programs as they evaluated the recommendations of the Wyoming Statewide Assessment Task Force. In between the face-to-face and virtual discussions, committee members reviewed drafts of their recommendations and provided written feedback which is reflected in their final recommendations.

Currently, Wyoming students enrolled in CTE programs are tested with the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) assessments, the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) assessments, and a variety of industry-standard credential and certifications. Members of this committee would like to see continued administration of these assessments to measure technical skill attainment and provide students with opportunities for certifications and credentials. Career readiness is assessed with the 21st Century Skills for Workplace Success (NOCTI) and WorkKeys, and college readiness is assessed with the ACT.

Students in grade 11 are required to take the ACT, and results are reflected in the state's accountability system in several indicators. However, the currently used WorkKeys assessment which measures career readiness is optional for Wyoming students. Therefore, reflected in the committee's recommendations is a strong emphasis on the importance of providing meaningful and accurate measures of career readiness for all Wyoming students leaving the K–12 education system. Since the terms "career readiness" and "career and technical education" are frequently referred to throughout their recommendations, the committee felt it was important to establish common definitions of the terms:

i. *Career Readiness (developed by the Wyoming Career Readiness Council):* College, Career, and Life Readiness means that an individual has the knowledge and skills necessary for success in postsecondary education, economically viable career pathways, and personal effectiveness in a 21st century economy.

ii. *Career & Technical Education (developed by the Perkins Foundation):* Career and Technical Education comprises organized educational activities that

    1. Offer a sequence of courses that:
        a) provides individuals with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions;

b) provides technical skill proficiency, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree; and

c) may include prerequisite courses (other than a remedial course) that meet the requirements of this subparagraph; and

2. Include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills, and knowledge of all aspects of an industry, including entrepreneurship, of an individual.

The Committee discussed the various purposes of CTE assessment in Wyoming. Overall, the Committee strongly endorsed strengthening the school accountability system by adding a specific measure for career readiness required for all students. The primary purpose would be to accurately report the status of career readiness in addition to the separate construct of college readiness for Wyoming students and schools. ***Members believe his should be further discussed by the Advisory Committee to the Select Committee on Educational Accountability.*** For individual students, these data would also be used in determinations of Hathaway eligibility.

The CTE Specialty Assessment Committee supports the requirement that all students in grades eleven (11) or twelve (12) demonstrate career readiness and recommended the following:

i. CTE technical skills assessments should be considered as a measure of career readiness in lieu of, or in addition to, the Career Readiness Assessment offered by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). The technical skills assessments that should be considered include: 1) industry standard credentials (e.g. Automotive Service Excellence); 2) professional certifications (e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant, Occupational Safety and Health Administration), end of CTE program content area assessments (e.g., welding, cabinet-making, business marketing, child development) that measure proficiency.

ii. Schools and districts may improve their accountability measures by counting students who are proficient on a career pathway exam and/or by counting students who have obtained industry-recognized certification.

iii. Students who do not take advantage of CTE programs shall be required to demonstrate career readiness before graduation. High schools should be accountable for providing all students with a minimum level of career readiness, further emphasizing that *just being ready for college does not make a student career ready.* This recommendation is reflected in the proposed changes to

legislation which appears in the *Recommendations for Policy Coherence* section of this report.

iv. Students who have met proficiency on a career pathway exam and/or who have obtained an industry recognized certification will have those achievements recorded on official transcripts.

iv. The CTE assessments should be funded by the State, to allow all CTE students the opportunity to receive an industry certificate/credential.

The Career and Technical Specialty Assessment Committee agreed the CTE assessments should be designed to specifically address the depth and breadth of the Wyoming Career and Vocational Education Content and Performance Standards (C/VE) and the articulated expectations for various CTE courses including complex knowledge and skills that are not easily measured.

They also agreed with applying the Task Force recommendations regarding reporting for various stakeholders to the CTE assessment reporting, with a special emphasis on the importance of professional development for teachers in order to impart knowledge of reports to key stakeholders.

The Committee also discussed testing times and the testing window. They recommend the window for 12th grade be flexible to allow for early graduation and administration upon course completion skills assessment for CTE students. This should be available as close to the end of their program as possible.

The committee did not agree with the Task Force recommendation for online administration of CTE assessments. The committee recommended CTE skills assessments have the option for a performance-based component for students to adequately show mastery of skills.

Regarding reporting claims for individual students, the Committee noted that the results should measure and reflect a common understanding of "career readiness." And the CTE assessments should allow students to meet eligibility requirements for a Hathaway scholarship. At the school level, the Committee recommends that the career readiness assessment be an indicator in the state's accountability system that is of equal value to the college readiness indicators.

The CTE Committee members recognized the need to align current statutes with the recommendation that would require all students demonstrate readiness before graduation. Therefore, the committee recommended the following change to current Wyoming legislation:

W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxx): *The ~~job skills assessment test~~ career readiness assessment shall be ~~optional~~ required*

for all students ~~in grade eleven (11) or twelve (12)~~ prior to graduation. ~~and shall at a minimum test in the areas of applied math, reading for information and locating information~~. CTE technical skills assessments shall be considered as a measure of Career Readiness in lieu of, or in addition to, the Career Readiness Assessment provided by the Wyoming Department of Education.

IV. Early Literacy/Kindergarten-Grade 2 Assessments

The Early Literacy/Kindergarten through Grade 2 (K–2) Specialty Assessment Committee met in Casper on May 24, 2016, followed by two virtual sessions on June 30 and August 12, to make recommendations for the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System for students entering kindergarten and students in grades K–2. Committee members identified priorities for assessments to meet the unique needs of this group of students and examined practices in other states, which are outlined in a memorandum from the Regional Education Laboratory to WDE leadership dated January 11, 2016 (see Appendix A). In between the face-to-face and virtual discussions, committee members reviewed drafts of their recommendations and provided written feedback which is reflected in their final recommendations.

Wyoming educators currently assess kindergarten readiness with two assessments: Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA) and Instructional Foundations for Kindergarten (IF-K). While these kindergarten readiness assessments are only required for districts with funded preschools, some other districts also choose to use these tools. For students in grades K-2, districts are currently administering Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to identify student achievement in mathematics and ELA. Districts are currently required to administer MAP or MAP for Primary Grades (MPG) in the early grades to support a statutorily-required longitudinal report on progress toward 85% proficiency by 3rd grade.

While committee members recognized that summative assessments prior to Grade 3 may help predict children's performance on future assessments, they believe standardized, summative assessments for K–2 students are not developmentally appropriate. Moreover, the committee emphasized that, in general, large-scale assessments of any kind for this population of students should be in place only if they can meaningfully guide instruction.

That said, some members of the Committee agreed that interim assessments aligned to the state's adopted content standards could be offered to districts and schools for voluntary use as a component of the statewide assessment system. The Committee recognized that optional interim assessments would provide teachers with detailed information which could be used to guide instruction. Any interim assessments provided for this age-group of students should be aligned to the state-adopted content and performance standards, including both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, with writing being part of ELA rather than a stand-alone assessment. The Committee further recommended including science in an optional Grade 2 interim assessment. Data from the interims should only be used to guide instruction and intervention services for students.

The Committee further emphasized the purpose of assessments prior to Grade 3 is to monitor children's progress toward a program's desired goals, identify children who may

have special learning or developmental needs, and evaluate and improve program effectiveness. Assessments for young children should be used to help students progress toward learning goals that are developmentally and educationally significant. Teachers may use the information gleaned from assessments for planning instruction. Developmentally-appropriate methods of assessment for young children include teacher observation, clinical interviews, collections of work samples, and performance on authentic activities. Assessments should be valid, reliable, and tailored to a specific purpose, and teachers should use multiple sources with relevant information to make decisions regarding instruction and interventions; diagnosis or labeling is never the result of a one-time summative assessment.

In terms of total testing time, the Committee concurs with the Task Force recommendations and suggests a limit for all formal K–2 assessments of 1% of required instruction hours.

Recommendations for Kindergarten Readiness:

i. The committee recommended that an optional kindergarten readiness assessment be included as a separate but aligned part of an expanded K–10 standards-based assessment system, and further recommended adding the following standards as references for interim assessments in the Wyoming Statewide Assessment System:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards
- Division for Early Childhood (DEC) standards

ii. The committee also recommended the kindergarten readiness assessment should include the 10 domains of the Wyoming Early Learning Foundation, which are:
   a. Approaches to Learning
   b. Creative Arts Expression
   c. Language Development (Common Core Speaking and Listening)
   d. Literacy Knowledge and Skills (Common Core English Language Arts)
   e. Logic and Reasoning
   f. Mathematics Knowledge and Skills (Common Core Mathematics)
   g. Physical Development and Health
   h. Science Knowledge and Skills
   i. Social and Emotional Development
   j. Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

iii. The Committee considered the mode of administration for early literacy/early childhood assessments. They recommended that multiple modes should be made available for the administration of the pre-kindergarten and K-2 assessments. The Committee indicated a combination of online and paper-based/human-scored

items is preferable given the necessity of observational-based measures in early childhood assessments. Specifically, the Committee felt that an online assessment with touch screen capabilities would be beneficial and also noted that online modality would allow for practice on computer skills.

iv. The Committee discussed extensively the existing state statute regarding reading intervention and assessment. Members agreed that the statute seems overly focused on dyslexia, when students struggle in reading for a variety of reasons. The Early Childhood Task Force recommends the following changes to existing statute:

WS 21-3-401: ARTICLE 4 - READING ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION

(a) Each school district shall ~~design and~~ implement a reading screening ~~program~~ instrument that measures student reading progress and includes ~~pre~~screening for ~~dyslexia and other~~ reading difficulties as early as possible in kindergarten through grade three (3). The screening ~~program shall include a reading assessment plan using screening~~ instrument~~s~~ shall be approved by the department of education~~, which is~~ and administered to all students in kindergarten through grade three (3), with standardized measures ~~providing statewide longitudinal data and~~ providing the capability for monitoring and measuring reading progress. In addition to a universal screening instrument, the department of education shall identify assessment instruments utilized to identify ~~dyslexia and other~~ reading difficulties. The program shall also include a plan for implementation of research based core curricula aligned to the ~~statewide educational program~~ uniform student content and performance standards and evidenced based interventions to meet the needs of all students. The program shall be multi-tiered and shall include various interventions to facilitate remediation of any reading difficulty as early as possible.

(b) Students not showing appropriate reading competence under this section shall be placed on an individualized reading plan to remedy the

reading related difficulty utilizing an appropriate evidence based intervention program, which may include a group reading plan. For students under an individualized education program (IEP) which addresses reading difficulties, the IEP shall be deemed sufficient to meet the requirements of this subsection and no additional plan shall be required.

(c) Each district shall annually report to the department of education on the progress of each of its schools toward reaching the goal of eighty-five percent (85%) of all students reading at grade level upon completion of the third grade. The report ~~shall include longitudinal data on all students in kindergarten through grade three (3), and~~ shall include the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency levels for the reporting period. The reporting shall also include the aggregate number of students identified by the screening instruments. ~~in each district by grade.~~ Each school not meeting the eighty-five percent (85%) goal specified under this subsection ~~shall submit an improvement plan to the department. At a minimum, the improvement plan~~ shall outline the district's general strategy for increasing reading proficiency for the next school year and shall specifically address the student-teacher ratio, the use of certified tutors and the use of instructional facilitators in kindergarten through grade three (3) in all schools within the district.

(d) The state superintendent, in consultation with Wyoming school districts, professionals in the area of ~~dyslexia and other~~ reading difficulties, and other appropriate stakeholders, shall promulgate rules and regulations as necessary to administer the reading assessment and intervention program pursuant to this statute.

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: REL SUMMARY OF K–2 READINESS ASSESSMENTS

REL Central
Regional Educational Laboratory at Marzano Research

Colorado • Kansas • Missouri • Nebraska
North Dakota • South Dakota • Wyoming

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jillian Balow, Brent Bacon, Dicky Shanor, Brent Young

FROM: Trudy Cherasaro, Jessica Allen

SUBJECT: Summary of information gathered about how states assess K-2 mathematics and English language arts

DATE: 1/11/16

This memo outlines information on state K-2 mathematics and English language arts (ELA) assessments that are either mandated or endorsed by state departments of education for use by districts or schools. Overall, six states have mathematics assessment programs and eighteen states have ELA assessment programs for grades K-2.

Methods

A search of all fifty state department of education websites was conducted with the purpose of finding information on K-2 mathematics or English language arts assessments. The search was not limited to assessments being used for state or federal accountability reporting; it included a search for any program that sponsored or provided recommendations for K-2 assessments. For each state department of education website, the following steps were completed in the order presented:

Locating the annual state student assessment calendar and scanning the calendar for any K-2 assessments

Reviewing the individual assessment information provided on the state's student assessment or accountability web pages

Reviewing the mathematics and English language arts sections of a state's curriculum and instruction pages for assessment information

Searching the state department of education for specific literacy programs.

Assessment Terminology

In general, states classified assessments as diagnostic, interim, or summative. This report retains the labels that were used by the states when describing their assessment systems. Typically, states defined diagnostic assessments as assessments used multiple times during the year. Stated purposes of the diagnostic assessments included adjusting instruction or identifying students who were at risk of not meeting state literacy requirements. Interim assessments were generally assessments that were given

multiple times during a year but less frequently than diagnostic assessments. Interim assessments could be used to modify student instruction during a given school year. Summative assessments were generally defined as assessments that were administered once as a measure of proficiency at the completion of an academic year. Summative assessments in grades K-2 served similar functions as the summative assessments in grades 3-8; however, they were associated with lower stakes, because K-2 summative assessments were generally not part of the school or district accountability or accreditation programs.

Findings

Mathematics

Six states had information about assessment options in mathematics for at least one grade from kindergarten to grade 2. Three states provide assessments for K-2, two states provide assessment options for grades 1-2, and one state provides options for grade 2 only. The states also vary in mandating the tests and providing options to districts in meeting the assessment requirements.

Table **1** provides information on the four states that have one state sanctioned mathematics test. sments are part of this system.

Table 2 provides information on the two states that allow the districts to choose from more than one mathematics assessment.

Table 1: States that provide one option to districts for K-2 mathematics assessments

State	Grades			Mandatory Testing	Assessment Type	Assessment Name	State or Vendor Developed
	K	1	2				
Arkansas		✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Iowa Assessment	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	No	Interim	K-2 MI Interim Assessments	State developed
North Carolina*	✓	✓	✓	No	Mid-Year Summative End of Year Summative	K-2 Mathematics Assessments	State developed
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	No	Summative	SAT 10	Pearson

*North Carolina has a system of instructional and assessment tools available for each grade level. These assessments are part of this system.

Table 2: States that provide more than one option to districts for K-2 mathematics assessments

State	Grade			Mandatory Testing	Assessment Type	Details
	K	1	2			
California*			✓	No	Diagnostic	In 2014, California halted mandated grade-2 testing and started to provide a list of department-reviewed assessments that districts could use for mathematics screening of second-grade students.
Ohio		✓	✓	Yes	Diagnostic	Ohio districts receiving an A or B performance index or value-added grade on the previous year's report card can use either the state test, a district-developed test, or a vendor diagnostic test. Districts that do not receive an A or B have to use the state-developed test. State regulations do not specify when the assessment needs to be administered. For 2015-16, districts can pick their own mathematics assessments, but have to report results for each student as "on track" or "not on track" to the state. The state test is comprised of two stand-alone assessments: the *screener (*based on grade-level expectations from the previous year) and the *full measure* (based on grade-level expectations of the current year). Districts can choose to administer one or both of these assessments.

**The approved list of grade-2 California Mathematics Assessments (vendors): Acuity Common Core (McGraw Hill), EasyCBM (Behavioral Research and Testing at the University of Oregon), iReady (Curriculum & Associates), , mCLASS: Math (Amplify), Measures of Academic Progress (Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)), Performance Series Mathematics (Scantron), Riverside Interim Assessments (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), and STAR Math (Renaissance Learning).*

English Language Arts

Eighteen states had information about assessment options in English language arts for at least one grade from kindergarten to grade 2. Sixteen states provide assessments for K-2, one state provides assessment options for grades 1-2, and one state provides options for grade 2 only. The states also vary in mandating the tests and providing options to districts in meeting the assessment requirements.

Table 3 provides information on the eleven states that have one state sanctioned ELA test. Table 4 provides information on the seven states that allowed the states to choose from more than one mathematics assessment. Table B-1 provides the detailed list of approved assessments for all of the states in Table 4 except Kansas. Kansas does not provide a list of approved assessments, but districts are provided guidance on how to select their own assessments. A list of acronyms for the assessments is in Appendix A.

Table 3: States that provide one option to districts for K-2 ELA assessments

State	Grades			Mandatory Testing	Assessment Type	Assessment Name	State Developed or Vendor Name
	K	1	2				
Arkansas		✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Iowa Assessments	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Idaho	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Interim	Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI)	State developed
Indiana	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD)	State developed
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Interim/ Summative	DIBELS Next	Dynamic Measurement Group
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	No	Interim	K-2 MI Interim Assessments	State developed
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Interim	DIBELS Next	Dynamic Measurement Group
North Carolina*	✓	✓	✓	No	Mid-Year and End of Year Summative	K-2 Literacy Assessment	State developed
Rhode Island**	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)	Pearson
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	No	Summative	SAT 10	Pearson
Utah	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Summative	DIBELS Next	Dynamic Measurement Group
Wisconsin***	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia

**North Carolina has a system of instructional and assessment tools available for each grade level. These assessments are part of this system.*

***Rhode Island requires only the highest grade in a school enrolling grade 2 or lower to take the test. For example, if a school is K-5, it would not be required to take the K-2 test. If the school is K-1, then grade 1 students would be tested.*

****Starting in 2016-17, Wisconsin will no longer provide a list of approved assessments. Districts will choose their own assessments.*

Table 4: States that provide more than one option to districts for K-2 ELA assessments

State	Grade			Mandatory Testing	Assessment Type	Details
	K	1	2			
Alaska	✓	✓	✓	No*	Diagnostic	Alaska provides a list of approved assessments.
California			✓	No	Diagnostic	In 2014, California halted mandated grade-2 testing and started to provide a list of department-reviewed assessments that districts could use for reading screening of second grade students.
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Interim	Colorado's READ Act requires all students in K-2 to meet minimum reading proficiency levels on one of the state approved interim assessments. Students below proficiency have to be periodically assessed using state-approved diagnostic tests. The state also provides a list of approved summative tests, but these tests are optional.
				Yes**	Diagnostic	
				No	Summative	
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Diagnostic	All schools are required to test students. Connecticut Priority School Districts are required to test multiple times a year and to report the results to the state.
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Diagnostic	Screening is required at the beginning of the school year and intermittently throughout the year. The state department recommends testing in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. The state supports the FAST assessment system, but districts could also choose from a list of approved commercial assessment products.
Kansas	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Summative	Districts select one grade in K-2 to test. The state provides a questionnaire to help schools choose their assessment(s). Reporting to the state is done at the school level. Schools report the number of students assessed, the percent of students that need support for each assessment and were selected as part of school placement programs.
Ohio - Reading	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Diagnostic	Ohio districts receiving an A or B performance index or value-added grade on the previous year's report card are required to use either the state test, a district-developed test, or a vendor diagnostic test.

State	Grade			Mandatory Testing	Assessment Type	Details
	K	1	2			
Ohio - Writing		✓	✓			Districts that do not receive an A or B have to use the state-developed test. State regulations did not specify when the assessment needed to be administered. For 2015-16, districts could pick their own writing assessments but had to report results for each student as "on track" or "not on track" to the state. Districts had to use one of the state-approved assessments for reading. The state test is comprised of two stand-alone assessments: the *screener (*based on grade-level expectations from the previous year) and the *full measure* (based on grade-level expectations from the current year). Districts can choose to administer one or both of these assessments.

**Alaska's State Board of Education repealed this as a mandatory testing regulation in December 2015 (Brian Laurent, personal communication, December 30, 2015).*

***Colorado's diagnostic assessments are required for students identified as having a significant reading deficiency.*

Appendix A: Assessment Acronyms

The following is a list of assessment acronyms from Table 3.

CPAA: Children's Progress Academic Assessment

DIBELS: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy

DRA2+: Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd Edition PLUS

FAST: Formative Assessment System for Teachers

GRADE: Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation

ISIP™ ER: Istation's Indicators of Progress Early Reading Assessment

MAP: Measures of Academic Progress

PALS: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening

SRI: Scholastic Reading Inventory

WRMT-III: Pearson Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, 3rd Edition

Appendix B: State Approved Assessments

Table B-1 provides the detailed list of approved assessments for all states in Table 4 except Kansas. Kansas did not provide a list of approved assessments, because districts were provided guidance on how to select their own assessments. A list of acronyms for the assessments is in Appendix A.

Table B-1: State-approved ELA assessments

Assessment	Vendor	AK	CA	CO			CT	IA	OH Reading
				I	D	S			
DIBELS Next (print) OR M CLASS: DIBELS Next (online)	Dynamic Measurement Group (print) Amplify (online)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
iReady	Curriculum & Associates		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AIMS web	Pearson	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
MAP Reading Assessments	Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
STAR: Early Literacy	Renaissance Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
DRA2 (Print) OR DRA2+ (online)	Pearson		✓						✓
Easy CBM	Behavioral Research and Testing at the University of Oregon	✓	✓						
FAST	Fast Bridge Learning			✓				✓	
M CLASS: Reading 3D	Amplify		✓						✓

Assessment	Vendor	AK	CA	CO			CT	IA	OH Reading
				I	D	S			
PALS	Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia			✓	✓				
Acuity Common Core	McGraw Hill		✓						
Burst Reading	Amplify				✓				
CPAA	NWEA				✓				
DIBELS 6th ed.	Dynamic Measurement Group						✓		
GRADE	Pearson								✓
ISIP™ ER	Istation			✓					
Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement	NA*							✓	
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test	Pearson				✓				
WRMT-III	Pearson				✓				
Performance Series: English Language Arts	Scantron		✓						
Performance Series: Reading	Scantron								✓
Riverside Interim Assessment System	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt		✓						
SRI	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt								
Terra Nova	Data Recognition/CTB					✓			
Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests	Pearson								✓
Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey	Riverside Publishing				✓				
STAR: Reading	Renaissance Learning							✓	

I= Interim, D=Diagnostic, S=Summative

**The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement instrument has been endorsed by Reading Recovery Council of North America and received approval by National Center for Response to Intervention (NCRTI) to be used as a screener for response to intervention (RTI) models. Citation: Clay, M. M. (2005). An observation survey of early literacy achievement (rev. 2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.*

Appendix C: References

Information for this report was gathered from the following websites in December 2015.

State	Webpage with information on state department of education website
Alaska	Early Literacy Screeners https://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/EarlyLit.html
Arkansas	Iowa Assessments http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/assessment/iowa-ancillary-materials
California	Grade 2 Diagnostic Assessment http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/da/
Colorado	Colorado READ ACT https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy
Connecticut	Literacy/English Language Arts http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=320866
Idaho	Idaho Reading Indicator Page http://www.sde.idaho.gov/assessment/iri/
Indiana	Office of Student Assessment http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment
Iowa	Early Literacy Guidance Information https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/legislative-information/early-literacy-guidance
Kansas	Early Reading Assessment http://community.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=5606
Louisiana	Louisiana DIBELS Next http://www.louisianabelieves.com/assessment/dibels-next
Michigan	Michigan Interim Assessment Webpage http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_63192---,00.html
New Mexico	Amplify/DIBELS http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/LiteracyEarlyChildhoodEd_K3plus_DIBELS.html
North Carolina – ELA	English Language Arts Resources http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/languagearts/elementary/k2literacy/
North Carolina - Math	Mathematics resources http://maccss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Elementary
Ohio	Diagnostic Assessment http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Testing/Diagnostic-Assessments
Rhode Island	Developmental Reading Assessment http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/DevelopmentalReadingAssessment(DRA).aspx
Tennessee	K-2 Assessment Information https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/grades-k-2-assessment
Utah	Utah DIBELS http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment/DIBELS.aspx
Wisconsin	PALS Early Screener http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/pals