

New Metrics

A Comparative Analysis of Local and National Assessment Practices

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The purpose of this analysis is to compare and contrast New Metrics to promising national practices of alternate assessments.

Overview

Since 2014, a group of New Mexican education practitioners and school leaders have worked on an alternate assessment framework called New Metrics. They designed New Metrics to assess student achievement and growth beyond standardized testing. New Metrics seeks to evaluate the college, career and life readiness of students.

The federal government affirmed the forward-thinking strategy of the local group when President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA, on December 10, 2015. ESSA received bipartisan support, as legislators reauthorized the 50-year old Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA. ESSA replaces No Child Left Behind, the previous version of the law.¹

ESSA final regulations, specifically Title I, Part B, released during December 2016 outline “how States can leverage the new innovative assessment demonstration authority in the ESSA, which will enable up to seven states to re-think their testing systems and pilot new approaches – helping to develop the next generation of statewide assessments.”²

Local leaders can leverage New Metrics to position New Mexico as a possible state (one of the seven referenced above) to receive innovative assessment demonstration authority. Application requirements and selection criteria underline additional work necessary for New Mexico to be eligible. One key area involves establishing comparability – “States are required to ensure their innovative assessments produce results comparable to the statewide assessments.”³

Other states, such as New Hampshire, Oregon and New York, have developed nationally-recognized assessment systems that may inform and improve New Metrics, thereby strengthening New Mexico’s ability to respond to the ESSA opportunities provided through Title I, Part B.

The purpose of the New Metrics work is to develop metrics and a tool that can document and measure the current and future effectiveness of public schools. The framework will also be used to facilitate cross-school collaboration to foster instruction and learning that is responsive to the community.

(New Metrics Purpose Statement)

¹ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft>

² EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT - Assessments under Title I, Part A & Title I, Part B: Summary of Final Regulations (2016, December 7). Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaassessmentfactsheet1207.pdf>

³ EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT - Assessments under Title I, Part A & Title I, Part B: Summary of Final Regulations (2016, December 7). Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaassessmentfactsheet1207.pdf>

Existing Assets

Through the New Metrics work group, New Mexico developed an assessment framework responsive to local needs. Building on promising practices of local schools, the New Metrics work group drafted common criteria for accountability focused on five domains/demonstrated capacities: (1) Multi-cognitive agility; (2) Participation in/ added-value to the community; (3) Lifelong learning; (4) Community and/or client driven; and (5) Relevant and authentic application of content skills. Local schools listed possible existing activities that could be used to assess the domains. The working group began compiling a repository of artifacts - project examples, portfolios, assignments, etc. – that provides tangible deliverables aligned with the activities.

The New Metrics framework has adapted during the past few years. The common criteria experienced multiple iterations responding to feedback from students and educators. Comparing the local framework to other alternate assessment frameworks, the New Metrics has great potential to evolve.



New Mexico

- Locally-led, locally-designed, locally-administered
- Common criteria/capacities for accountability
- Project-based assessments
- Incorporates student feedback
- Holistic evaluation recognizing social and emotional growth

National Promising Practices to Consider

New Mexico can look to and learn from other state frameworks:



New Hampshire - the one existing federal pilot program

- Cross district collaboration provides high level professional learning opportunities
- Designed to maximize the learning opportunities for each individual student
- Locally-developed, locally-administered (NHDOE, 2016)
- Quality review to calibrate scoring across districts
- Competency based education
- Personalization, student engagement, deep and rigorous learning and authentic tasks (EdWeek, 2015)



New York

- Active learning
- Strategies for corrective action
- Multiple ways for students to express and exhibit learning
- Graduation level performance-based tasks aligned with Learning Standards
- External evaluators of student work
- A focus on professional development (Performance Assessment.org, 2003)

What are some key action items to implement a new assessment model?

New Hampshire learned “teachers need to commit to collaborate on sharing curriculum, developing assessments, and scoring and analyzing student work together. Districts and administrators need to provide the structures that allow teachers time to collaborate, and the training and support for teachers to lead the work themselves and see the successes.”⁴

How can New Mexico use innovative assessment to serve some of its most vulnerable students?

New York Performance Standards Consortium successfully serves vulnerable populations of students in 38 public, non-charter high schools. Consortium schools use “four Performance-Based Assessment Tasks: an analytic literature essay, a social studies research paper, a student-designed science experiment and higher-level mathematics problems that have real world applications” to “demonstrate college and career readiness and to qualify for graduation.”⁵ A graphic with more information about the New York Performance Standards Consortium Assessment System can be found in *Appendix A*.

How will New Mexico ensure comparability?

In “Assessment Matters: Constructing Model State Systems to Replace Testing Overkill,” Monty Neill, executive director of FairTest, describes a number of strategies to ensure comparability, including re-scoring (or “moderation”), anchor tasks and tests and validation studies. Common rubrics can be helpful with re-scoring and New Metrics has a working draft of common criteria/capacities for accountability.⁶ The **Learning Record** also offers a system how to assign meaningful work, document student progress and assess using a developmental scale⁷.

What type of assessment may be appropriate for younger grades?

Neill highlights the **Work Sampling System** as an assessment option for students K – 3 and up to Grade 6, with the following seven domains⁸:

1. Personal and Social Development
2. Language and Literacy
3. Mathematical Thinking
4. Scientific Thinking
5. Social Studies
6. Arts
7. Physical Development

⁴ *A Peek Inside New Hampshire’s Performance Assessment Model*. (2015, September 18) Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_deeply/2015/09/a_peek_inside_new_hampshires_performance_assessment_pilot.html

⁵ Neill, M. (2016) *Assessment Matters: Constructing Model State Systems to Replace Testing Overkill*. (p. 37). Boston: National Center for Fair and Opening Testing. Retrieved from <http://www.fairtest.org/sites/default/files/FairTest-Model-Assessment-Report-2016.pdf>

⁶ Neill, M. (2016) *Assessment Matters: Constructing Model State Systems to Replace Testing Overkill*. (pp. 15-18). Boston: National Center for Fair and Opening Testing. Retrieved from <http://www.fairtest.org/sites/default/files/FairTest-Model-Assessment-Report-2016.pdf>

⁷ Syverson, M.A. (2014). Learning Record Forms. Retrieved from <http://www.learningrecord.org/olr.html>

⁸ Neill, M. (2016) *Assessment Matters: Constructing Model State Systems to Replace Testing Overkill*. (pp. 43-44). Boston: National Center for Fair and Opening Testing. Retrieved from <http://www.fairtest.org/sites/default/files/FairTest-Model-Assessment-Report-2016.pdf>

Summary Table

Framework Component	Alternative Assessment Framework (State)		
	New Metrics (NM)	PACE (NH)	Performance Standards Consortium (NY)
<i>Explicit involvement of local educational leaders in designing and implementing the accountability system⁹</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Performance assessments used to inform teachers and students how learning activities are working and what might need to be adjusted (formative) along with serving to help document what students have actually learned (summative)¹⁰</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Establish comparability</i>	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Use of common rubric</i>	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Focus on project-based learning and personalization</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes

Conclusion

The New Metrics work group developed an assessment framework with a solid foundation created by local wisdom. When comparing New Metrics to other national frameworks, New Metrics has some similarities and some room to grow.

If New Mexico chooses to pursue “innovative assessment demonstration authority” offered through ESSA, building on the New Metrics work could accelerate the process. Further developing a framework years in the making could competitively position New Mexico to be in the running for one of the seven pilot sites. Additional efforts to address federal requirements, establish comparability, create common rubrics and cultivate ongoing feedback from local educators and students will be necessary. These efforts will be a worthwhile investment for the local leaders eager to leverage the ESSA opportunity to create a responsive, locally-led assessment system.

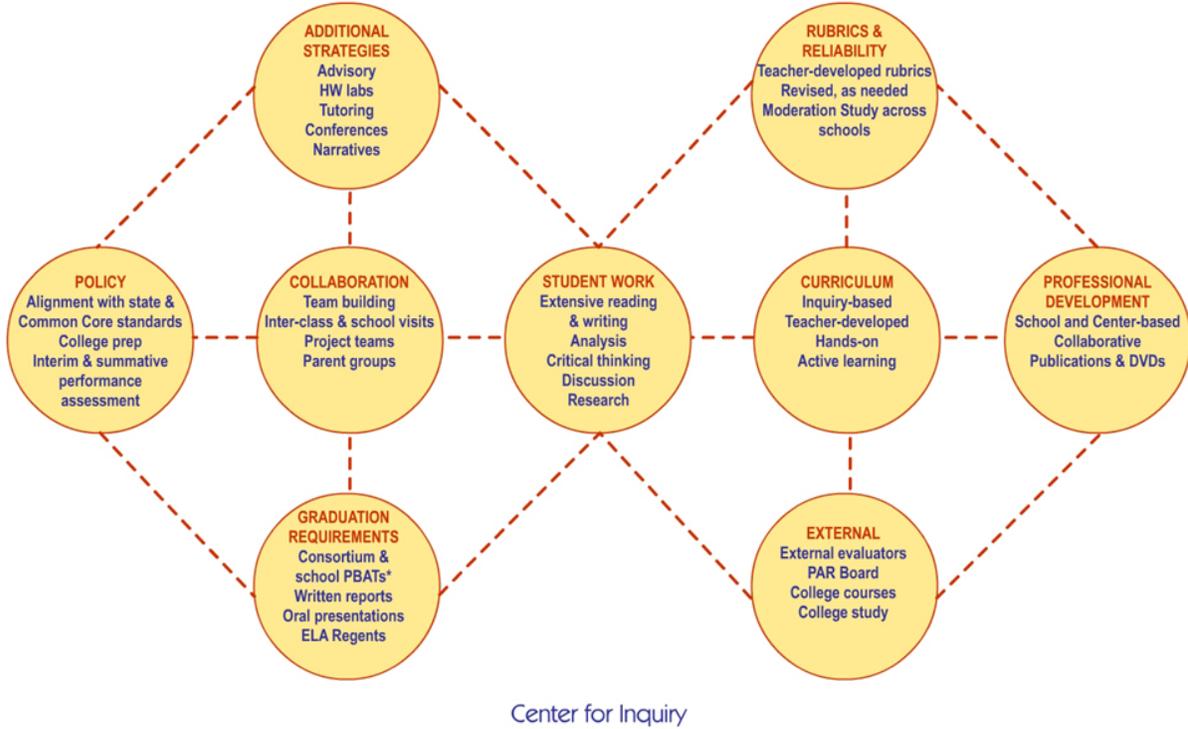
⁹ New Hampshire Department of Education. *Moving from Good to Great in New Hampshire: Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE)* January 2016.

¹⁰ New Hampshire Department of Education. *Moving from Good to Great in New Hampshire: Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE)* January 2016.

Appendix A

New York Performance Standards Consortium

Performance-Based Assessment System



*Performance-based Assessment Tasks

¹¹ New York Performance Standards Consortium Performance Based Assessment. Retrieved from http://performanceassessment.org/images/performance/NYPBAS_chart.jpg