

CAREER READINESS ASSESSMENTS ACROSS STATES

A Summary of Survey Findings

How Do States Define Career Readiness?

How Is Career Readiness Assessed?

How Do States Use These Assessments?

What Issues Do States Face in Assessing Career Readiness?



Career Readiness Assessments Across States

A Summary of Survey Findings

The notion of what it means for a student to be “career-ready” is changing as a result of the recent push by the federal and state governments to ensure that all students are prepared for college and careers by the time they graduate from high school. While much attention has been paid to the “college-ready” aspect of college and career readiness, the term “career-ready” still means different things to different people. Although many state departments of education are currently engaged in defining career readiness and determining how best to measure it, the differences in the scope and complexity of those definitions are significant. Unfortunately, the information available about how states and school districts are defining career readiness and which assessments they are using to measure a varied set of career-related skills is scant and often confusing. It is equally difficult to obtain a coherent understanding of which kinds of career-related skills each assessment measures and how states and districts are using the results of the assessments to evaluate student readiness.

This report by the Center on Education Policy (CEP) describes how states are defining career readiness and which assessments states and districts are using to measure this attribute. The report is based on a survey administered in the summer of 2013 to state directors of career and technical education (CTE) or their designees about career readiness assessments. A total of 46 states completed the survey. (The District of Columbia is counted as a state in the tallies in this report.)

Key Findings

- ***Only 14 of the 46 states responding to the survey have a statewide definition of what it means for high school students to be career- or work-ready.*** The states that reported having such a definition include Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, and Virginia. Another 20 states said they are working on developing such a definition.
- ***States and their school districts are using various assessments to gauge career readiness.*** Among the most common tests are ACT’s WorkKeys, used in 32 states to assess employability skills or applied academics related to career readiness, and various types of industry-based certification or licensing exams, used in 38 states to assess students’ technical skills.
- ***In many states, school districts or students, not the state, pay the costs associated with taking CTE exams.*** The costs of assessments of employability skills or applied academics to measure career readiness are most commonly paid by districts, according to state survey responses. The costs associated with technical assessments are most often shared between districts and students. State-developed assessments are an exception to these trends; state agencies cover the costs of their own assessments.
- ***More states use student results on career readiness assessments to meet federal reporting requirements than use them to make school accountability decisions.*** A majority (38) of responding states reported using career readiness assessment results to meet the reporting requirements of the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act. Less than half (21) of the survey states reported using these results in their school accountability systems.

- ***Nearly all (45) of the survey states reported facing challenges in assessing high school students' career education or their level of career readiness.*** Commonly cited challenges include securing funding for assessments, collecting data, identifying and implementing high-quality assessments, and determining which career education or readiness standards should be assessed.
- ***The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have had little impact thus far on the way that career and technical education skills are assessed.*** Of the 40 survey states that have adopted the CCSS, 20 said it is too soon to know how the Common Core will affect state or district efforts to assess career readiness. Two states reported that the career-readiness assessments used in their states have been aligned to the CCSS, and six more said this type of alignment is in process. Eight states reported that the CCSS have not impacted their assessments of career readiness.

Background on Policy Context and This Report

Vocational education has long been a part of public schooling in America and has been an area of federal support since 1917. The separation of academic instruction and vocational education, which is now referred to as career and technical education, began in the early part of the 20th century, often at schools that focused solely on preparing high school youth for entry-level jobs. The Vocational Education Act of 1963, while continuing to support a separate system of education by funding the construction of area vocational schools, also broadened the definition of vocational education to include training within high schools for jobs in specific industries or businesses.

With the education reform movements of the 1980s, policymakers and practitioners began to call for more linkages between vocational and academic education. These movements were motivated in part by the 1983 report *A Nation at Risk*, which raised alarms about a loss in U.S. international economic competitiveness due in part to the failings of the public education system (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Subsequent federal legislation—most notably, the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984 and its later iterations—emphasized the importance of effective vocational programs to our nation's future. In recent years, the Obama Administration has also emphasized the value of career readiness by making the adoption of college- and career-ready standards a priority focus of its competitive Race to the Top grant program and a condition for receiving waivers of the No Child Left Behind requirements. Today, despite the fact the CTE courses are not usually part of the required curriculum, 96% of students take at least one CTE course, and 38% take three or more (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

A range of other initiatives, such as those outlined in the *Pathways to Prosperity* project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, have also emphasized the need for students to experience hands-on learning in addition to the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom (Symonds, Schwartz, & Ferguson, 2011). As a result of these initiatives, and the recent attention focused on ensuring that all students are ready for both college and careers, many states are now considering what it means for all of their high school students to graduate “career-ready” and, in turn, how best to measure that readiness.

As a starting point for learning more about how states are defining and assessing career readiness, CEP researchers consulted with policy experts from the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc). We also consulted with state CTE directors in four states. Drawing from these conversations, we developed a survey about career readiness assessments. The survey was administered in June through August of 2013 to state CTE directors or their designees in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Ultimately, 46 states completed the survey. More information about the study methods is included in the appendix of this report.

This summary report presents an overview of the findings from the survey. Additional information about the survey findings can be found on the CEP website (www.cep-dc.org) in the form of four related papers and assessment profiles.

The related papers list the states that gave particular responses to various survey questions and provide more detailed explanations of findings on the following topics:

1. How do states define career readiness?
2. How is career readiness assessed?
3. How do states use these assessments?
4. What other issues do states face related to assessing students for career readiness?

The assessment profiles include descriptive information for the major career and technical assessments and list the states that use a particular assessment, the types of students that take the assessment, and the ways in which the assessments are used.

This summary report, the related papers, and the assessment profiles are not intended to provide a detailed, comprehensive account of all career assessments and their uses. A broad range of diverse career assessments are currently in use both across and within states and districts. Moreover, as we learned from interviews with select state officials, the assessment of students' career and technical skills is often *not* centralized to the state level, unlike state testing in academic content areas, such as math and English language arts. Rather, many states leave it to districts and schools to decide which CTE assessments students take.

With these considerations in mind, we hope these materials will offer a general understanding of the variety of assessments that states, districts, and schools are using to address the challenge of preparing all students for careers after high school.

How Do States Define Career Readiness?

As shown in **table 1**, only 14 of the 46 states responding to the survey—Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, and Virginia—said they have a statewide definition of what it means for high school students to be career- or work-ready. In light of the ongoing policy debate about whether the skills needed for career readiness are the same as those required for college readiness, we asked states whether they are using the same definitions for both of these concepts. Eleven of the 14 states that have a definition of career readiness reported using the same definition for both, while three states (Kentucky, Nebraska, and North Dakota) have different definitions for career readiness and college readiness.

More than one-third (20) of the responding states said they are in the process of articulating a statewide definition of career readiness. Nine states said they do not have such a definition.

State-reported status	Number of states
Has a definition	14
In the process of articulating a definition	20
Does not have a definition	9

Table reads: Fourteen states reported having a statewide definition of what it means for high school students to be career- or work-ready.

We also asked states to provide their definition of career readiness, if they had one. Sixteen states—including two in which the definitions were still under development—provided these definitions, which are included in the first related paper on the CEP website.

How Is Career Readiness Assessed?

Types of skills assessed and broad assessment categories

Before administering the survey, CEP researchers grouped the kinds of skills students need to be successful in a career into three categories: applied academics, employability skills, and technical skills. We established these categories after discussions with experts in this field and with select state directors of CTE programs. It became clear from these discussions that state officials have different philosophies about which type of skills are the most important measure of career readiness and whether all students should master each of these skills. For example, some states may focus on ensuring that all high school graduates demonstrate some level of employability skills but may assess technical skills only for students enrolled in a CTE program. Other states may focus solely on applied academics on the grounds that students who demonstrate academic competencies are prepared to begin a career after high school.

Because of these different approaches, we asked states to use the following definitions in responding to a question about which types of skills are (or will be) assessed by the state or its districts to determine career readiness:

- **Academic skills:** Skills learned in core academic content areas, such as English language arts, math, science, and social studies
- **Employability skills:** Skills seen as necessary to succeed in entry-level employment, such as time management, problem solving, self-discipline, perseverance (often referred to as “soft skills”)
- **Technical skills:** Industry-based skills or those needed to pursue a specific career pathway, such as nursing or finance

As shown in **table 2**, 36 of the 46 survey states said that students in their state are assessed on academic skills related to career readiness. Somewhat fewer states reported that their students are assessed for technical (33 states) or employability skills (28). A large majority (39) of survey states indicated that the state or its districts are assessing or will assess at least one of these types of skills, 36 states reported assessing at least two of these types, and 22 reported assessing all three types of skills.

Type of skill	Number of states
Academic skills	36
Technical skills	33
Employability skills	28

Table reads: Survey respondents in 36 states reported that the state or its districts assess (or will assess) academic skills related to career readiness.

Note: Respondents were instructed to select all of the applicable response items.

To get a better sense of which types of tests, if any, are being used to gauge career readiness, we asked survey respondents to list the assessments that the state agency or its districts use to assess for 1) employability skills and/or applied academics related to career readiness and 2) technical skills related to career readiness. The survey combined employability and applied academic skills into a single assessment category because several of the most common assessments measure both types of skills. (Throughout this summary report and accompanying related papers, we refer to these types of tests more generally as career readiness assessments.)

Each of these two assessment categories is explained in more detail below.

Assessments of employability skills and/or applied academics

Survey respondents listed numerous assessments that are used by their state or its districts to assess students for employability skills and/or applied academics related to career readiness. These tests range from national assessments, such as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), to state-developed tests, such as the Oklahoma Career Technical Assessments or the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessments, which are administered in 26 program areas.

States most commonly reported using the following three nationally available testing systems to assess employability skills and/or applied academics:

- The ASVAB, which was developed by the U.S. Department of Defense and is typically available to any student, particularly those interested in a military career (32 states)
- WorkKeys, a job skills assessment system developed by ACT (32 states)
- The National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) assessments (22 states)

Several states reported using other types of assessments to gauge employability skills and/or applied academics:

- SkillsUSA Workplace Readiness Assessment (16 states)
- Other national assessments (for example, the ACT Explore and ACT Plan) (15 states)
- A state-developed assessment(s) (14 states)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (12 states)
- Other ways of measuring employability skills or applied academics related to career readiness (9 states)
- National Work Readiness Assessment (5 states)
- Soft Skills Assessment Programs, Learning Resources, Inc. (3 states)

More detailed information about several of these tests is included in the assessment profiles accompanying this report on the CEP website.

Assessments of technical skills

The majority of states and/or their districts also assess high school students for technical skills as part of their larger efforts to evaluate career readiness. Survey respondents listed several assessments that the state or its districts use for these purposes. The most commonly reported assessments used by states include the following:

- Industry-based certification and/or licensing exams (38 states)
- NOCTI assessments (27 states)
- SkillsUSA assessments (23 states)

Industry-based certification and licensing exams include those designed for specific industries, such as carpentry, cosmetology, culinary arts, plumbing, robotics, and many others. Other assessments of technical skills used by states or their districts include state-developed (20) and locally-developed (16) assessments. Thirteen states also listed other national assessments developed by or associated with various CTE organizations. More information about the wide range of technical assessments developed and administered by many entities is included in the second related paper accompanying this report.

Finally, several states reported using other ways of measuring technical skills, including student projects, portfolios, or competitions. In Missouri, for example, students' technical skills are evaluated at Career and Technical Student Organization competitions at the local, state, and national levels. In Utah, teachers assess performance indicators in each course as part of the Utah Skill Certification Exam program. West Virginia is implementing simulated workplaces that will provide documented evidence of employability skills, applied academic skills, and technical skills.

Who pays for these assessments?

In most states where students take assessments of employability skills or applied academics to determine their career readiness, school districts pay the costs associated with these tests, according to our survey responses. State-developed assessments are an exception to this trend; survey respondents reported that the state agency pays for these assessments. In some instances, both districts and students pay some portion of the costs of the assessments. For example, this is the case in Arizona for the NOCTI, SkillsUSA, and Soft Skills assessments; in South Carolina and Vermont for the WorkKeys assessment; and in New Mexico and Oregon for the NOCTI assessments. In addition, the ASVAB is paid for by the U.S. Department of Defense with no cost to students.

The costs associated with the technical assessments used in survey states are most often shared between districts and students. For example, districts and students both pay a portion of the costs for industry-based certification and/or licensing exams in 13 states: Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Vermont. Costs for these certifications and exams are shared among state agencies, school districts, and students in Idaho, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Again, the costs of state-developed technical assessments are most often covered by the state agencies.

How Do States Use These Assessments?

A large majority (38) of survey states indicated they use results from one or more of the career readiness assessments administered in their state to meet federal reporting requirements. Other states reported using results from these assessments for school accountability (21 states) or student accountability (19). Ten states (Colorado, Connecticut, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, and Virginia) reported using these assessment results for all three purposes.

Federal reporting

Federal funds for career and technical education programs are authorized through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-270), also known as Perkins IV. Perkins IV requires states to submit an annual report containing information on various achievement indicators, including academic attainment information for CTE students in reading/English language arts and math, student graduation rates, and technical skills attainment, among other indicators (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

As displayed in **figure 1**, most (38) of the survey respondents indicated that they use results from career readiness assessments for purposes of Perkins IV accountability. Several states specifically noted that they use technical skills assessments, such as industry-based certification and/or licensing exams, to report on students' technical skill attainment for Perkins IV grants.

School accountability

In addition, 21 survey respondents said that results from the various career readiness assessments are used in their state's school accountability system (see figure 1). In Illinois, for example, WorkKeys is used as part of the Prairie State Achievement Examination, which measures the achievement of all grade 11 students in reading, math, and science. North Carolina uses WorkKeys as the career readiness measure under its high school accountability model and the ACT as the college readiness measure. West Virginia reported using results from WorkKeys for data profiles and teacher evaluations.

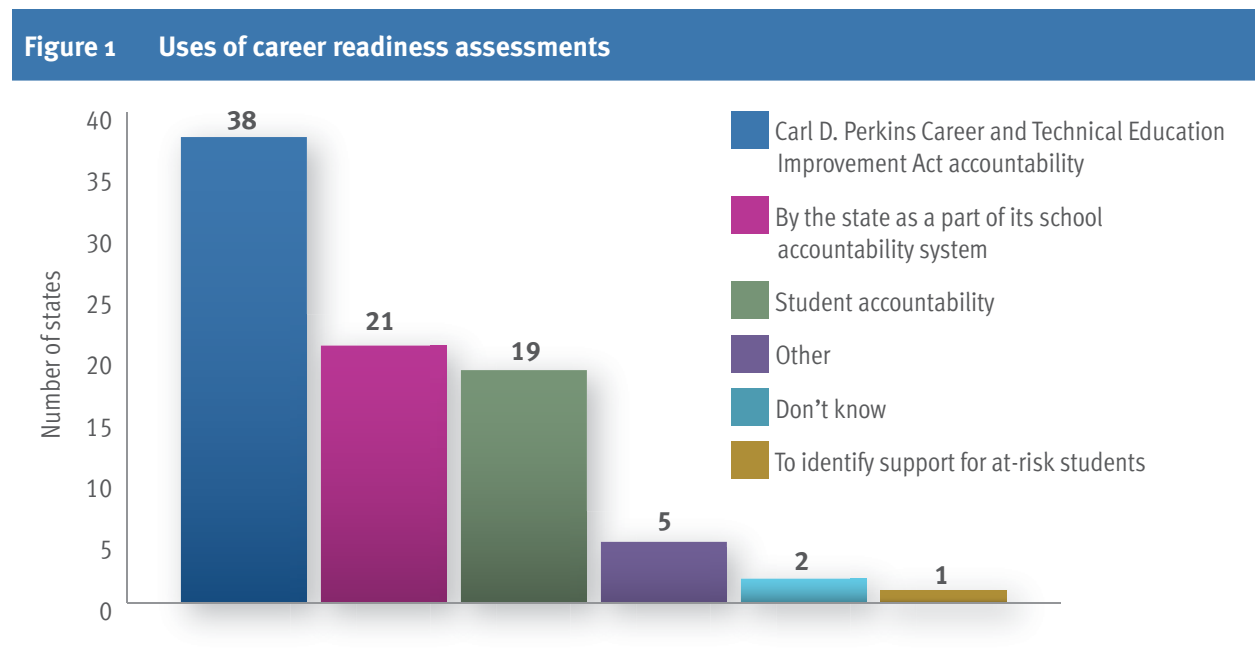


Figure reads: Thirty-eight states indicated that they use results from career readiness assessments for Perkins IV accountability purposes.

Note: See the third related paper accompanying this report for individual state responses.

Student accountability

Nineteen states reported using results from the career readiness assessments for student accountability purposes (see figure 1). The survey responses provided more specific information about how these results are factored into student accountability.

Thirteen of these 19 states consider these assessment results as a part of students' course grades and/or require students to take one or more career readiness assessments in order to pass a related course or program of study (see **figure 2**). Some states also reported using these assessment results as a requirement for graduation, for receipt

of a career/technical diploma, for an endorsement on a standard diploma, or for scholarship eligibility. Districts and schools may use results from these assessments for other student accountability purposes not noted by state officials in their survey responses.

Figure 2 Uses of career readiness assessments for student accountability

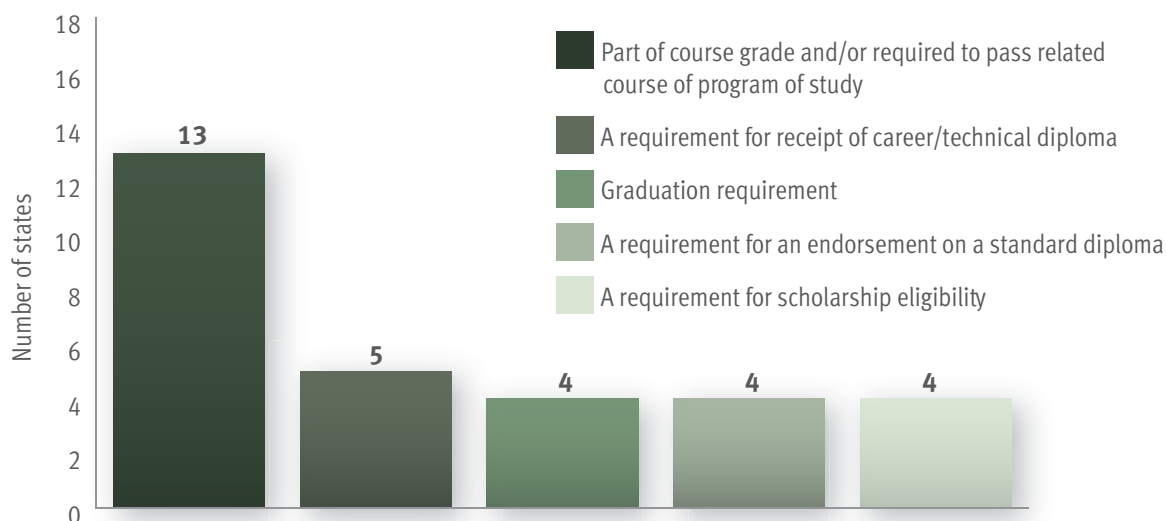


Figure reads: Of the 19 states that reported using results from career readiness assessments for student accountability purposes, 13 said they use these test results as part of students' course grades and/or require students to take the assessment(s) to pass a related course or program of study.

Note: Respondents were instructed to select all of the applicable response items.

The survey specifically asked states whether they allow students to substitute scores on career readiness or industry-based assessments for scores on state exit exams—comprehensive or end-of-course exams that students must pass to receive a high school diploma. As shown in **figure 3**, half (23) of the survey states said they do not allow this type of score substitution, while 4 states said they permit it (North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Virginia). For example, in Oklahoma students may substitute a level 5 WorkKeys score for academic assessments that students must pass to receive a high school diploma. In North Carolina, industry credentials may be substituted for CTE end-of-course exams given at the state level. (Students are not required to pass the CTE end-of-course exams to graduate or receive credit for the CTE course.) Ten states reported that the question is not applicable because they do not require students to pass any exam to graduate.

Figure 3 State policies for allowing students to substitute scores on career readiness assessments for scores on high school academic exit exams

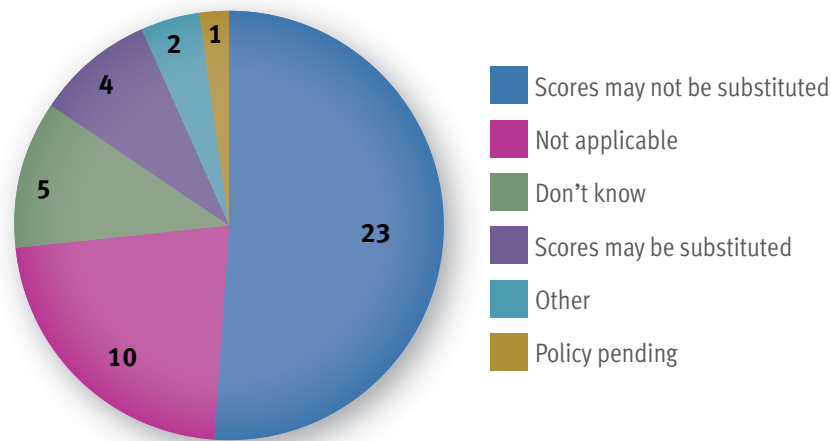


Figure reads: Twenty-three states do not allow students to substitute scores on career readiness assessments for scores on other tests that students must pass to receive a high school diploma.

Note: The number of states totals 45 because one state did not answer this item on the survey.

Note: See the third related paper accompanying this summary report for individual state responses.

More detail about the score substitution processes in the four states that permit it can be found in the third related paper accompanying this report.

What Other Issues Do States Face in Assessing Career Readiness?

Data collection

Several states reported that they collect data on the numbers of students who take career readiness or career education assessments and track these students' experiences after high school. For example, Connecticut collects CTE data for Perkins IV reporting, including information about where students are working or enrolled six months after they graduate from high school and student retention rates at the postsecondary level. In Kentucky, all career readiness data is collected through the Technical Education Database System (TEDS). These data are shared with the Kentucky Office of Assessment and Accountability to determine if the Kentucky Department of Education is meeting its delivery targets. Follow-up data are collected to determine if students have transitioned to postsecondary training or the workforce.

Numerous other survey states plan to include data about the numbers of students who take career readiness assessments and their experiences after high school in their statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS). These include Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Vermont. These data systems are largely funded through the federal Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002, which has been awarding competitive grants to states to develop these systems since 2005 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Some states, including New Jersey, South Carolina, and Virginia, reported that these data collection efforts are already underway, while others, such as Alaska, Montana, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Vermont, said they plan to collect this type of information as part of their SLDS in the future.

State challenges in assessing for career readiness

States reported facing various challenges in assessing high school students' career education or career readiness. As displayed in **figure 4**, the most common challenge was funding these types of assessments. State funding challenges may explain why school districts and students cover the costs of certain career readiness assessments in several states.

Other commonly cited challenges include getting data from third-party assessment providers, such as information on student attainment of industry certifications, and identifying or implementing high-quality assessments. Most states (43) reported at least two challenges, and five states (Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, and Oregon) said they face all of the challenges listed in figure 4, excluding the "other" response item.

Figure 4 Challenges states face in assessing students' career readiness

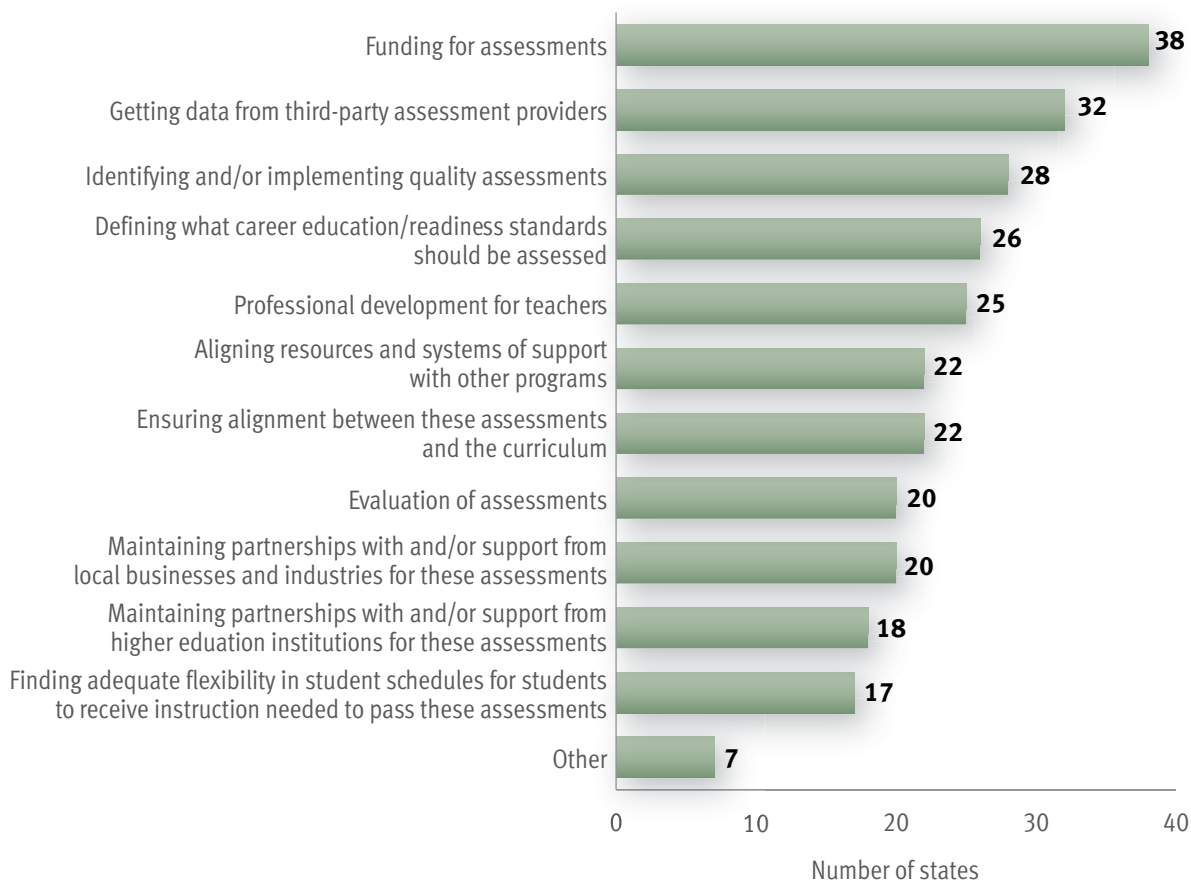


Figure reads: Thirty-eight states reported facing challenges with funding career readiness assessments.

Note: Respondents were instructed to select all of the applicable response items.

How Has the Common Core Affected Career Readiness Assessments?

By design, the Common Core State Standards are intended to ensure that students who master the standards are prepared in English language arts and math for both college and careers. With this dual purpose in mind, we asked survey respondents how the adoption of the CCSS has affected the efforts of their state or districts to assess career readiness. Forty of the 47 states (including D.C.) that have adopted the CCSS in one or both subjects responded to this survey question. As shown in **table 3**, half (20) of these states indicated that it is too soon to know how or if the CCSS will affect their efforts to assess career readiness. Only eight states reported that the career readiness assessments available in their state have been aligned to the CCSS (Connecticut and North Carolina) or are in the process of being aligned (California, Hawaii, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Utah). Four states—Mississippi, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Vermont—said the CCSS have not influenced the state’s assessment of career readiness. Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wyoming replied that students in their state are assessed or will be assessed on the CCSS by other state tests, but that career readiness assessments have not been affected.

Response	Number of states
Too soon to tell	20
Career readiness assessments available in our state are in the process of being aligned to the CCSS	6
Career readiness assessments available in our state have been aligned to the CCSS	2
Adoption of the CCSS has not impacted our state’s assessment of career readiness	4
Students in our state are assessed or will be assessed on the CCSS by other state assessments, but the career readiness assessments have not been impacted	4
Some “third party” companies that administer career readiness assessments used in the state have aligned or are aligning their assessments to the CCSS	3
Don’t know	4

Table reads: Respondents in 20 states said it was too soon to tell how their state’s adoption of the CCSS will affect the state’s or districts’ efforts to assess career readiness.

Note: Respondents were instructed to select all of the applicable response items.

The intersection point between college and career readiness as it pertains to the CCSS and the soon-to-be released CCSS-aligned assessments can be confusing to many who are trying to gauge expectations about what the standards will teach and what the assessments will measure. It is important to recognize that the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), one of the two state consortia developing tests aligned to the CCSS, adopted a College- and Career-Ready Determination (CCRD) policy in the fall of 2012 to provide clarity as to what the PARCC assessments were designed to measure. The CCRD policy states that the PARCC assessments are designed to measure academic preparedness for postsecondary education, not all of the skills needed to be career-ready. In a joint statement from PARCC with ACTE and NASDCTEc, the organizations emphasized that the CCRD policy does not make claims about academic preparedness for any specific career (ACTE, NASDCTEc, & PARCC, n.d.). While the CCRD policy does help clarify what the PARCC assessments will and will not measure, the ability of states to align career readiness assessments with the CCSS is still in its nascent stage.

Conclusion

Only 14 of the states responding to the CEP survey have a statewide definition of what it means for high school students to be career- or work-ready. Furthermore, the assessments used by states and their districts to gauge career readiness vary widely across and within states, as does the funding for these tests and the uses of the assessment results.

This decentralized system may be poised for change, however. Under the banner of “college and career readiness for all,” policymakers and practitioners in almost every state are implementing the Common Core State Standards. Prior to the CCSS, most academic content exams were unique to each state—but that is changing. And if the Common Core is meant to help states follow a more coherent and comparable path to college and career readiness for all students, the findings from this report indicate that there is much variation in how states are defining, assessing, and ensuring that all students are *career-ready*.

Indeed, a large proportion of states surveyed said it was simply too soon to tell how the Common Core would affect the ways in which states or their districts assess career readiness. In light of this finding, questions remain about the CCSS and their impact on career readiness assessment. Specifically, what might the Common Core mean for career readiness assessments as states begin using the newly developed CCSS-aligned assessments? And how might the career readiness aspect of the CCSS affect state, district, and school expectations for all students?

While the CCSS are already influencing math and ELA instruction, it is too soon to tell the full impact that the standards will have on assessing career readiness. Many policymakers and educators believe all students can benefit from both academic and career and technical education, especially during high school when boredom and questions about relevance can derail many struggling students. Creating a more coherent definition of career readiness at the state level and ensuring that assessments being used by school districts are indeed measuring the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary education or the workforce could go a long way in ensuring college and career readiness for all.

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Appendix: Study Methods

Beginning in January 2013, CEP researchers consulted with policy experts working on career readiness and career and technical education from the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC). CEP staff also collected background research on related existing state policies. Based on the information gathered from this preliminary research, we contacted state-level CTE program directors in four states—Maryland, New York, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania. CEP researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with these officials in March and April of 2013 to learn more about the career readiness assessments and policies in these states.

Information from these four state-level interviews was used to construct the items for a national survey of state CTE directors. The survey questions and response items were shared with our contacts at ACTE and NASDCTEC, piloted in two states, and then revised based on this collective input.

The survey was administered electronically in June through August of 2013 to state directors of CTE or their designees in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Forty-six of these states completed the survey for a response rate of 90%. The survey responses were imported to an Excel file, and the data were cleaned and checked for duplicate entries or missing response items. Additional follow-up via e-mail and telephone was necessary for some survey submissions.

Some of the items in the survey were closed questions, and response item frequencies were totaled and percentages calculated using the formula functions in Excel. Several questions allowed respondents to explain their responses, and some were open-ended questions asking for additional information or feedback about career readiness assessments and state policies. These written responses were simultaneously uploaded to the Excel file and analyzed to extract common themes presented in the study narrative and develop the assessment profiles, which are available online. State survey respondents had the opportunity to verify the information in this report and accompanying papers prior to publication.

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This report was researched and written by Jennifer McMurrer, CEP's senior research associate, and by Matthew Frizzell, CEP research associate. Shelby McIntosh, CEP research associate, guided the initial research on the project, including the survey development, administration, and preliminary analysis of the findings. Nancy Kober, a CEP consultant, edited the report and assisted with the writing. Diane Stark Rentner, CEP's deputy director; Maria Ferguson, CEP's executive director; and Nanami Yoshioka, CEP's graduate research assistant, provided advice and assistance on the report content and assisted with the writing.

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