

Graduation Requirements and Measures

A Review of Performance Assessment
Implementation in Select States for the
New York State Education Department

Region 2 Comprehensive Center

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Executive Summary

In February 2019, Chancellor (now Commissioner) Betty A. Rosa committed to rethinking New York State’s high school graduation requirements, and in July 2019, the Board of Regents (the Board) announced that it would create a Blue Ribbon Commission (Commission) to review these requirements and reconsider what a New York State diploma should signify to ensure educational excellence and equity for every student in the state. Since then, the Board and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) have undertaken a comprehensive and inclusive review of the state’s high school graduation requirements.

The Region 2 Comprehensive Center (R2CC) is one of 19 such centers across the United States and its territories. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, these regional centers provide high-quality, intensive capacity-building services to state educational agencies, regional educational agencies, and local educational agencies to identify, implement, and sustain effective evidence-based practices that support improved educator and student outcomes. The R2CC serves Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island. In late December 2019, NYSED requested support from the R2CC, led by WestEd.

In fall 2022, the R2CC team completed an extensive information-gathering process that consisted of a comprehensive literature review on the relationship between graduation requirements and college, career, and civic readiness and success; a policy and practice scan on state- and country-specific graduation policies and practices; and a stakeholder analysis from in-person and virtual stakeholder meetings across the state of New York. The comprehensive report was presented to the Board and the Commission in November 2022.

The report’s findings highlighted the array of testing requirements for graduation and the importance of multiple measures for graduation based on the stakeholder analysis. NYSED requested a scan of performance-based assessments across the country, and the R2CC team began with a landscape scan of performance-based assessments across 12 states and/or consortia that had been identified by the NYSED Performance-Based Learning and Assessment

Network (PLAN) Pilot team last year. In consultation with NYSED, the R2CC team then narrowed the scan to seven states to conduct deep-dive case studies with state and consortium leaders. The case studies consisted of interviews and focus groups with state education agency (SEA) staff or consortium leadership to understand implementation processes, successes, areas for improvement, and lessons learned. This report outlines the general themes that emerged from the case studies, followed by state profiles (which detail more information about the implementation of performance-based assessments) for each of the states and the consortium included in the data collection.

General Case Study Findings

Despite the case study states taking different approaches to implementing performance-based assessments, a common theme shared by the states was that **performance-based assessments are used to provide more opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of skills and content. Case study states integrate performance-based assessments as a complement or an alternative to traditional, multiple-choice tests.** The following themes emerged as the state interviewees discussed considerations and lessons learned for effective implementation of performance-based assessments.

1. Intentional work should be done to align performance-based assessments with standards, curriculum, and instruction.
2. Collaboration and involvement with teachers and administrators is crucial.
3. States and districts need to invest in building the capacity of teachers and leaders to effectively design and implement performance-based assessments.
4. Allow for flexibility and adaptability in implementation.
5. Provide clear communication about what performance-based assessment is, what its purpose is, and how it will be used.
6. Address inclusion and equity throughout the process.
7. Build advocacy and support to demonstrate the commitment to performance assessments.

Introduction

In 2015, the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) created a renewed interest in performance-based assessments across the country after a focus on standardized, multiple-choice assessments under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (Maier et al., 2020; Parsi & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Many states, districts, and institutes of higher education recognized that using only standardized, multiple-choice tests did not demonstrate the full range of students' skills and knowledge (Guha et al., 2018). Performance assessments are one type of assessment that states and districts are exploring and incorporating into their assessment systems following NCLB under the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA).¹

Performance assessments describe a continuum of activities to demonstrate mastery and proficiency, ranging from constructing a response to creating a product to performing an activity (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Performance assessments can include tasks such as essays, authentic demonstration of learning (often found in career and technical education), portfolios, exhibitions, and capstone projects (where several performance tasks culminate into a product). Although there are some nuances in the literature about what a performance-based assessment must entail (Bland & Gareis, 2018), for the purposes of this report to NYSED, we conceptualized performance-based assessments according to the definition at the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

New York State Education Department's definition of *performance-based assessment*

A performance-based assessment requires students to demonstrate or apply their knowledge, skills, and strategies by creating a response or product or doing a task. Students' responses or performances are typically judged against standards or criteria in a checklist or rubric focusing on the stages of skill development and what a student can do.

¹ We note that many states incorporated performance-based assessments prior to NCLB, though the focus shifted to standardized assessments under NCLB.

Since the enactment of ESSA, researchers have focused on descriptive studies of performance-based assessments or case studies within individual states. For example, Stosich and others (2018) identified four strategies used by 12 states, including supporting classroom instruction, graduation requirements, school accountability, and federal accountability. At the time of publication, most states were incorporating performance-based assessments as part of their classroom instruction or school accountability (Stosich et al., 2018). Other researchers have studied districts or consortia to understand if and how performance-based assessments support deeper student learning (Bland & Gareis, 2018; Evans, 2019; Guha et al., 2018; Kim, 2005; Maier et al., 2020; Marion & Leather, 2015). Each of these studies has demonstrated that performance-based assessments are a promising practice for measuring higher-order thinking, depth of knowledge, and college and career readiness.

Yet, the policy context is changing as states and districts are rethinking how to implement performance-based assessments to measure mastery of content and skills after NCLB. As a result, many studies published in the last five years are already outdated. This report contributes to the growing research on performance-based assessment, with a focus on implementation beyond smaller-scale initiatives. We highlight specific state-level policies that include performance-based assessments as part of a more robust assessment system, including the challenges and successes across the states, and lessons learned. Our primary goal is not to advocate for performance-based assessments but to support the Commission in their information gathering as they rethink NYSED's graduation requirements.

Methods

This report addresses the following questions:

- How do the identified states use and integrate performance assessments as part of a measurement system for students to demonstrate college and career readiness?
- What can New York (and other states) learn about performance assessment implementation (i.e., challenges, successes) from the identified states?

The study began with a landscape scan of 12 states identified by NYSED through the PLAN Pilot exploratory phase. These states are in two “tiers,” the first including states with established, statewide requirements or options for performance assessments (Colorado, Oregon, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Virginia) and the second including states with emerging performance assessment options or frameworks (New Mexico, Kentucky, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, and Washington). The landscape scan included a review of publicly available websites, documents, reports, and policies to understand the purpose and history of performance assessments in each state, specific policies in support of performance assessments, and how the assessments were implemented statewide. After completing the landscape scan, the R2CC team, in consultation with NYSED, selected seven states (Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Vermont)² in order to conduct a more in-depth data collection through focus groups and interviews with state department agency staff members. The interviews and focus groups lasted no more than one hour and were conducted by the R2CC team using a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix B).

² Note that the in-depth case study included the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Educational Assessment (MCIEA), which is a consortium of districts implementing performance assessments with support from the MCIEA.

Case Study Findings

How do the identified states use and integrate performance assessments as part of a measurement system for students to demonstrate college and career readiness?

The states take different approaches, but all use performance assessments to provide more opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of skills and content.

Each state representative who participated in the state interviews expressed that their goal for performance-based assessments was to provide districts, schools, and students with additional ways to demonstrate learning. Some also mentioned that one goal of performance assessments was to provide a more meaningful way to assess deeper learning compared with traditional, multiple-choice tests.³ States like Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Colorado implemented performance assessments because of new legislation requiring proficiency-based or competency-based education, updated graduation requirements, or essential skills. These representatives said that the new policy left a gap in assessing this new approach to learning and instruction; they sought an alternative that provided more flexibility to demonstrate proficiency and mastery of skills. It is worth mentioning that not all of the states included in the case studies were using performance assessments for graduation specifically, but the state representatives still highlighted that the skills and content measured by performance assessments in their state were capturing the key skills they wanted their high school graduates to leave with to prepare them for college and/or the workforce.

Another commonality shared by the case study states is that performance assessments are developed and selected locally. Each state emphasized that the power of performance assessments is that they are developed locally and linked to classroom instruction. As one state representative noted, “What we don’t want is for these to become the state assessments [that] replace the local work, because the power is in the teachers really thinking about the students and what they want their students to demonstrate.” For a quick guide as to how each state in the study uses performance-based assessments, see the column titled “Purpose” in Table 1 at the end of this section.

³ This was often mentioned in contrast to standardized tests administered statewide or as a requirement for graduation.

“We’re trying to create opportunities so students can elevate their best work . . . and have it reflect who they are and what they know. Then they can carry that with them forward, post-graduation.”

— SEA Representative

While the states in our case studies were implementing performance assessments either as an option or as a complement to traditional, multiple-choice tests, a key finding is that states are approaching the implementation of performance assessments differently. This finding aligns with recent research on performance-based assessments (e.g., Stosich et al., 2018). Some states in our scan, such as Oregon and Virginia, have mandatory, established policies about the implementation of performance assessments in their administrative rules or statutes. These policies require the use of performance assessments for the specific grade levels and content areas. For example, in 2014, Virginia required local alternative assessments, which include performance assessments, for grade 3 history and science, grade 5 writing, U.S. history to 1865, and U.S. history from 1865 to the present. The law removed the statewide standardized assessment for these subjects and grade levels, and it required that districts develop local alternative assessments in lieu of the standardized tests. This policy did not *eliminate* statewide standardized assessments, however, as they are still given to students in other required grade levels and subjects.

In Oregon, the legislature passed a bill in 2011 that required a local performance assessment in grades 3 through 8 and once during high school. Prior to the legislation, high school graduation was dependent on credit requirements. Now, Oregon requires students to demonstrate proficiency through standardized tests, a local assessment option, or the Work Sample. The Work Sample is a representative sample of student work and has more rigorous requirements than other locally developed performance assessments, as they specifically assess the proficiency of Oregon’s Essential Skills. This includes stricter guidelines for scoring and administering the assessment and an official state scoring guide.

Other states have taken a more voluntary approach to implementing performance assessments. Colorado and New Hampshire implemented them through voluntary professional learning communities and highlighted that this approach was used to gain buy-in from districts and schools interested in developing and implementing high-quality performance assessments. Colorado piloted its performance assessment initiative as an option for its graduation requirements (which include a myriad of options, including standardized tests such as ACT/SAT), while New Hampshire piloted its initiative with a variety of grade levels and subjects.

Other states don't have a formal policy or initiative but encourage the use of performance assessments for classroom instruction. Vermont and Rhode Island, for instance, have a proficiency-based education system and encourage performance assessments that are embedded in the classroom to demonstrate mastery for graduation, though there is not currently a formal policy, statute, or initiative to support statewide implementation.⁴

“We’re not running away from standardized measures, we would just like them to be used sensibly and placed properly in our overall system [to measure learning] for kids.”

— SEA Representative

The information synthesized through the scan and case studies demonstrated that states are integrating performance assessments into a broader assessment strategy. Even within states where performance assessments are required for certain grades and subjects, this is only one of the assessments that students take during the school year. For example, in Virginia, districts are required to complete a Balanced Assessment Plan, which should indicate the breadth of assessments (e.g., multiple-choice, performance assessment) used to measure students' content knowledge and skills for each grade level and content area. Another example is Colorado's Graduation Menu of Options, where performance assessments are included as one option for students to demonstrate mastery to graduate high school. Other options on the menu include SAT/ACT scores, dual enrollment, advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, ACCUPLACER exams, and industry certification. Massachusetts, a state without a formal policy, requires students to sit for the statewide standardized assessment (MCAS) but supports classroom-embedded performance assessments through the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA).

Each state has its own procedures for developing and scoring performance assessments, though every state relies on locally-developed performance assessments that are developed and piloted by teachers. Each state interviewee stressed that the local context was important for the development of performance assessments, and while some states (like Oregon and Virginia) provide resources such as student samples, there is still an emphasis on performance assessment creation as a local endeavor. Almost all case study states mentioned that they approached scoring as a collaborative process, where teachers develop and calibrate the scoring rubrics together and then pilot the rubrics before making them available to others.

⁴ As noted in the state profiles (Appendix A), Rhode Island previously required performance assessments for graduation, but this is no longer a state requirement.

Some states (such as Colorado) emphasized the importance of a statewide approach to implementation that included teachers in developing quality criteria and determining “non-negotiables” for performance assessment design, which they called a key factor in the development of high-quality performance assessments.

Of the states reviewed by R2CC, four (Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Virginia) had established systems for ongoing professional learning and provided resources through the state education agency or an intermediary. Colorado, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire use professional learning communities and intermediaries to continue to provide support to districts and schools for professional learning. Virginia relies on desk audits to inform the technical assistance and resources it continues to provide to its districts to meet the regulatory guidelines. Other states such as Oregon and Rhode Island rely on district professional development or regional conferences for ongoing professional learning.

Table 1 provides a summary of how performance assessment is implemented in Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia.

Table 1: Summary of Performance Assessment Implementation

State	Initiative	Policy	Rollout	Purpose (Stosich et al., 2018)	Subject/grade level	Who develops?	Common scoring rubric?	Ongoing support
CO Tier 1	Collaboratively-developed, standards-based performance assessment	Colorado’s Graduation Guidelines Menu of Options	Voluntary	Classroom instruction; high school graduation	High school subject and grade level varies	Locally developed by educators	Yes	Through PLCs
NH Tier 1	Performance Learning and Assessment Consortium for Education (NH PLACE)	None now; formerly used IADA waiver under ESSA for Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE) ⁵	Voluntary	Classroom instruction; formerly school and federal accountability	Subject and grade level varies across districts and schools	Locally developed by educators	Yes	Through New Hampshire Learning Initiative
OR Tier 1	Local performance assessment requirement	OAR 581-022-115: Assessment of Essential Skills	Mandatory	High school graduation; school accountability	Required in math, scientific inquiry, speaking, and writing; encouraged in other areas	Locally developed by educators	Yes	No

⁵ See Appendix A: State Profiles for a more detailed discussion of the history of PACE and New Hampshire’s transition to NH PLACE.

State	Initiative	Policy	Rollout	Purpose (Stosich et al., 2018)	Subject/grade level	Who develops?	Common scoring rubric?	Ongoing support
RI Tier 1	Performance assessment tasks aligned to Rhode Island Department of Education standards	Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements	Voluntary	High school graduation; classroom instruction	High school, grade level varies	Locally developed by educators	No	No
VA Tier 1	Performance assessment and local alternative assessments	§ 22.1-253.13:3.C of the Code of Virginia	Mandatory	School accountability; classroom instruction	Grade 3 history and science, grade 5 writing, U.S. history to 1865, and U.S. history from 1865 to the present	Locally developed by educators	Yes	Yes
MA Tier 2	Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA)	N/A, not a statewide initiative	Voluntary	Classroom instruction; school accountability	Subject and grade level varies across districts and schools	Locally developed by educators	No	Through MCIEA and partner districts

State	Initiative	Policy	Rollout	Purpose (Stosich et al., 2018)	Subject/grade level	Who develops?	Common scoring rubric?	Ongoing support
VT Tier 2	Vermont transferable skills graduation proficiencies and performance indicators	Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements Education Quality Standards	Voluntary	High school graduation; classroom instruction	Subject and grade level varies across schools and districts	Locally developed by educators	N/A, in development phase	N/A, in development phase

What can New York (and other states) learn about performance assessment implementation (e.g., challenges, successes) from the identified states?

“Oftentimes, when people in the field hear the word assessment, there is this belief that it has to be an interruption—stopping instruction, it has to sit outside of that normal workflow. And so I think that that misperception—and I don’t think that it’s unique to [State]—I think that’s been a very long-lived misperception about what assessment means.”

— SEA Representative

Intentional Work to Align Assessments With Standards and Curriculum

Each state interviewed by R2CC emphasized that performance-based assessments should be aligned with standards and embedded into the classroom’s curriculum and instruction. The state interviewees noted that this was an important aspect of ensuring that performance assessments were serving their purpose, as one interviewee put it, “to provide assessment opportunities that evaluate content and standards together using authentic, student-centered methods.” Some states mentioned that a misalignment in assessment and curriculum could be perceived as an add-on activity for teachers and could also feel “jarring” to students in the classrooms.

An important point made by some interviewees was how Essential Skills, Transferable Skills, 21st Century Skills, and Portraits of a Graduate, developed by many states and supported through performance assessment initiatives, factored into these assessments. These skills are embedded into state standards and require that students demonstrate a range of skills such as communication and collaboration. Two state representatives cautioned against treating these skills as separate and distinct from the assessment process and advised taking care to incorporate both content and skills into the performance assessment process. As one interviewee expressed, “For students to successfully apply and transfer content knowledge, they must develop and use their essential skills. Content is the vehicle through which students demonstrate essential skills.”

“You can’t just have these big lofty goals around what you want for your graduates and then [not align those goals to] the opportunities you provide them for learning and for demonstration. So that’s where we’re seeing a lot of shifts being made. People are saying, ‘These are the skills we want our kids to walk out of our buildings with?’ In order to get there, we have to change things. And that includes looking at curriculum, looking at the way students are engaged, looking at opportunities for performance assessment, or competency-based learning, or whatever that pathway is.”

— SEA Representative

Collaboration and Involvement With Teachers and Administrators Is Crucial

Interviewees also mentioned that collaboration among teachers, schools, and districts is crucial for the successful implementation of performance-based assessments. First, involving teachers in decision-making processes and providing them with resources, support, and time to create high-quality assessments and rubrics led to more buy-in from teachers as well as more valid and reliable measures of student mastery. Co-creation of assessments, resources, and rubrics among teachers and leaders was emphasized as a key component of implementing high-quality performance-based assessments.

In Colorado, for example, the implementation of performance-based assessments has been a collaborative process with educators across the state. In partnership with teachers, Colorado developed design elements and quality criteria for performance assessments, along with templates and protocols to support their development. Teachers engaged in peer-to-peer feedback to improve the design and methodology they used to develop performance assessments. They also participate in scoring performance assessments collaboratively. That is, more than one teacher scores student performance assessments independently and then the teachers come to a consensus on a single score by discussing a co-created rubric.

In Virginia, interviewees highlighted that collaborative scoring sessions were a way to enhance teachers’ understanding of rubrics and promote buy-in. State representatives reported that teachers who have engaged in such activities showed greater support for performance assessments and a willingness to put in the necessary effort.

Furthermore, at least three states highlighted that teachers who actively engaged in the design processes acted as “ambassadors,” continuing to lead and support other teachers within their districts and in other districts. In Rhode Island, a former principal noted that teachers in their school would collaborate across different grade levels and subject areas to develop common performance assessments. In addition, the school would use faculty development days to collaboratively score high school performance assessments so that the burden of scoring did not fall on one teacher or one subject area.

“It creates a culture and capacity where folks rely on one another even when they move from one place to another. We’ve had teachers move to other systems and transform their entire science departments into performance assessments. There’s a lot of power in that.”

– SEA Representative

While there was flexibility in how districts and schools approached performance assessments, there was an emphasis on collaboration and high-quality practices. Some states acknowledged that, as one state expressed it, “A supportive leadership message from the top is essential for successful implementation.”

Implementation of Performance Assessments Requires Ongoing Capacity Building and Professional Learning

States and districts need to invest in building the capacity of teachers and leaders to design and implement performance assessments effectively. State representatives commented that developing, piloting, and testing performance assessments and scoring rubrics takes significant time and requires initial professional learning to transition teachers to a performance assessment mindset as well as ongoing professional learning. Having the intermediary capacity, whether through an external consultant or agency, to support and drive the implementation of performance-based assessment systems has also been helpful for New Hampshire, MA-MCIEA, and Colorado. These intermediaries or agencies can provide guidance, professional development, and resources to support educators in effectively implementing the assessments. As one state noted, “the work of performance assessments is much closer to the ground than a state agency can typically get, nor is it always their charge.” In contrast, some states without intermediaries acknowledged staffing and capacity limitations in terms of professional learning and support from the state agency. These states reported that they relied on regional service

districts or district-led professional learning, which left some state interviewees feeling disconnected from what districts, schools, and educators needed to improve implementation.

Allow for Flexibility and Adaptability

Each state's journey with performance-based assessments has been marked by adjustments and revisions based on lessons learned. Some states, such as Colorado and New Hampshire, began implementation with a pilot group of districts. Other states that enacted statewide policies for performance-based assessments, like Virginia, noted that the policy was refined over time. State interviewees reported that flexibility in implementation, such as allowing districts to choose their entry points and tailor assessments to their needs, or starting with more flexible requirements and tailoring them to fit the needs of the districts and schools, has been beneficial.

For example, in Colorado, some districts have implemented districtwide performance assessments, while others have individual teachers creating their own assessments. Lessons are being learned as the implementation progresses, and the state aims to encourage knowledge sharing to influence the revision of assessment practices. In Virginia the state guidelines were rolled out immediately, but they allowed for flexibility to account for the capacity-building period that was necessary for teachers to move into a different way of thinking about learning and assessment. Under the initial model in New Hampshire, Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE), districts could opt into different participation levels. Interviewees credited this tiered approach with building buy-in and trust, allowing educators to opt in to the initiative at a level they were comfortable with. The PACE initiative, now Performance Learning Assessment of Consortium for Education (NH PLACE), is using the lessons learned in previous iterations to improve professional learning and support to the partner districts.

Another aspect of flexibility emerged within states that required one type of assessment, whether that was primarily multiple-choice tests or performance-based assessments. State representatives highlighted that districts often requested more flexibility in the types of assessments offered, adding that when any assessment was implemented without a clear purpose, it became a checkmark for compliance rather than a meaningful assessment of student learning. A unique example of how one state is examining its assessment portfolio is Virginia, a state that requires districts to develop Balanced Assessment Plans outlining the type of assessment used for all course content and subjects. These plans examine the breadth of assessments required for all students and identify those that do not serve instructional purposes, are redundant, or might be replaced by new assessments that can more accurately measure content and skills.

Engaging in Clear Communication About Performance Assessments

States interviewed by R2CC discussed the importance of communication about performance assessments at all levels. They acknowledged that communication should begin at the state level, with one state interviewee noting, “Clear guidance at the state level communicates both permission and a real assessment of learning.” Some states also expressed that communication from the state can outline the design criteria and “non-negotiables” so that districts and schools can work within a framework.

Another aspect of communication frequently cited by interviewees was communication with families. Most states said they try to provide clear communication about what performance assessment is (and is not) and what the opportunities are for students. Some states noted a challenge in communicating with parents and communities that may only have experience under a traditional grading system. States said they emphasize that performance-based assessments provide an opportunity to move away from traditional standardized tests and offer students choice and voice in demonstrating their learning. Interviewees also noted that it’s important to work with parents, communities, and other interested groups to co-design and provide input about the performance assessment guidelines.

Ensuring Equity and Inclusion Throughout the Process

Most states voiced that performance assessments provide more equitable opportunities for students to use prior learning and their unique backgrounds to showcase their learning. State interviewees offered examples of students who performed poorly under traditional grading systems or were disengaged in many subject areas but who excelled when performance assessments were included in their classrooms. Some states also noted that performance assessments did not guarantee equity.

Three concerns surfaced during the interviews when equity was discussed in relation to performance-based assessments. The first concern was that performance assessments could be perceived as being less rigorous and that students who did not perform well could be tracked into a remedial pathway (if the pathway were optional) or that students could be excluded from enrichment activities if they were tracked into a remedial performance assessment activity (if the pathway were a requirement). The second concern regarded inequity in quality implementation across districts due to varying capacities of teachers and leaders. The third concern was about inequitable or unreliable performance of assessment scoring.

Some states mentioned that they addressed the first and third concerns by creating “non-negotiables” about the expectations and quality of performance assessments, which helped alleviate concerns that performance-based assessments are somehow less rigorous than other assessment options. As one state emphasized, “These options are not meant as a hierarchy; they’re flat.”

State interviewees also highlighted that creating a clear rubric and providing the rubric to students can reduce this grading bias. At the state level, the development of standard practices and processes to norm and score tasks and assessments can also provide clear guidance to address equity concerns around scoring. Finally, states mentioned the ongoing capacity-building and the use of an intermediary to drive professional learning for performance assessments as a way to alleviate uneven quality of implementation. They stressed that having a process to know and understand where implementation was successful and where it needed improvement, as well as the capacity and resources to address it, was critical to ensuring equity in access to high-quality performance assessments.

Some interviewees also called out the importance of multiple pathways and diverse demonstrations of knowledge in order to avoid a gatekeeper mentality. They also emphasized the importance of connecting with communities historically marginalized by assessment practices and incorporating community perspectives and ways of knowing into the assessment process as a way to address the first equity concern. Other states noted that special attention should be given to addressing the needs of diverse student populations, including language learners and students with disabilities. Performance assessments should be designed to be inclusive and provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. For example, Colorado and Oregon emphasize the importance of considering language learners by allowing performance assessments for some subjects (e.g., English language arts in Oregon) in their home language.

“One of the things to think about any time we’re doing large-scale assessments that have significant consequences, such as graduation, is making sure we are connecting with communities who have been traditionally and historically harmed by the assessment process—being able to honor and affirm different identities and ways of knowing and then being able to have that surface in the performance assessment and the tool that’s being used to measure it . . . Because without those pieces and without that conversation, we will continue to perpetuate harm.”

— SEA Representative

Advocacy and Funding Support

States with emerging implementation of performance assessments stressed that advocacy efforts at the state level, including engaging with policymakers, can influence the implementation and recognition of those assessments. State interviewees stressed that building support among policymakers and securing dedicated funding for performance assessment initiatives demonstrates to local school districts and schools that there is a commitment from the state, which can drive policy changes and further support implementation efforts. Interviewees also emphasized the importance of engaging teachers' unions as well as superintendent and principal associations to build buy-in and advocacy.

“You could have a district that is advanced in performance assessment and formative assessment practices. And then a new lead comes in and says, ‘Well, we’re going to buy this curriculum and use these assessments,’ and teachers are going to just go with that. And, well, that creates just a real mess out there. If I were in a state really trying to do this at the state level now, I would be really working closely with the superintendent and principals’ associations, as well as curriculum directors, because those are the folks who are making those decisions.”

— SEA Representative

Appendix A: State Profiles

Colorado: Tier 1

History

In 2019, the Colorado Department of Education launched a pilot initiative with five schools across four districts to develop and implement collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments (Diaz-Billeo & Pierre-Louis, 2021). The catalyst for this work was the new Graduation Guideline Menu of Options, which included performance-based assessments as one option for students to demonstrate postsecondary and work readiness. During the pilot, participants identified the essential skills that aligned with Colorado’s Academic Standards and would be assessed by the performance-based assessments. Additionally, participants developed a common rubric to assess and score quality (Diaz-Billelo et al., 2021). After the two-year pilot, the work shifted to developing professional learning communities to develop and norm performance-based assessments across the state. This work has continued with educators from 38 school districts.

Relevant Policy/Legislation

Colorado does not have a formal policy or statutory requirement to develop or implement performance-based assessments. These assessments are included as an option for students to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness. As a local-control state, Colorado has high school graduation requirements set by local school boards, but boards can select from a menu of options developed by the Colorado Department of Education, which includes collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments.

Implementation

Implementation of the collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments began with five schools across four districts. During the first pilot phase, educators identified which skills should be emphasized in building out performance-based assessments for graduation (Diaz-Billelo et al., 2021). In the second phase, the Colorado Department of Education sponsored a statewide professional learning community that focused on educators developing high-quality examples of performance assessments to assess students’ demonstration of Colorado’s Essential Skills. The tools developed under the pilot included a statewide scoring rubric. Colorado educators can now use an online platform that integrates a

variety of tools and resources. This professional learning community supports the use of collaboratively-developed, standards-based performance assessments in their classrooms (Colorado Department of Education, n.d.).

Definition

According to the Colorado Department of Education’s website, performance assessments are defined as “an authentic demonstration of student knowledge and skills through the creation of a complex product or presentation” (Colorado Department of Education, n.d.). The product and process are intended to be relevant to students in order to prepare them for success in the postsecondary and workforce world. The definition of collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments in the Colorado Menu of Graduation Options is also very specific about a culminating project where students apply the Essential Skills for Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness through a product or presentation.

Relevant Subjects/Grades

Because the focus of collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments is on Essential Skills, these assessments emphasize content areas such as math, reading, writing, and communication and can be used as an option for high school students to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness in these subjects (Colorado Department of Education, n.d.). However, districts or schools can develop common performance assessments for any grade and/or subject combination.

Scoring Process

Collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments must be scored using the statewide scoring criteria. This was developed under the pilot initiative. Performance assessments used under the Menu of Graduation Options must be collaboratively scored to be used as valid measures for graduation (Colorado Department of Education, n.d.).

Supports Provided

School districts that participate in the professional learning community (PLC) to develop and implement collaboratively developed, standards-based performance assessments receive support from the Colorado Department of Education. This includes access to a range of tools to ensure that the assessments meet the statewide scoring criteria. PLC members also have access to an online scoring platform.

New Hampshire: Tier 1

History

New Hampshire's Performance Learning and Assessment Consortium for Education (NH PLACE) is a product of the learning and evolution of the state's Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE). New Hampshire developed PACE as an alternative accountability and assessment system to the statewide assessment system. In 2015 New Hampshire received a waiver, the first in the nation, from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and then the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (Becker et al., 2017). The two-year waiver included a pilot implementation period (2014–2015, 2015–2016), and the state then received a one-year extension (2017–2018). In 2018, New Hampshire was the second state approved to participate in the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) under ESSA (State of New Hampshire Department of Education, 2018). The primary goal of the PACE system was to improve student outcomes by transforming instruction and assessment in classrooms across the state (State of New Hampshire Department of Education, 2018).

Relevant Policy/Legislation

The state of New Hampshire does not have formal legislation or statutory regulations about performance-based assessments. PACE was grounded in the competency-based educational approach that the state adopted in 2005 through the New Hampshire Administrative Code, Section Ed 306.27, which required high schools to award academic credit based on mastery or competencies rather than seat time (High School Curriculum, Credits, Graduation Requirements, and Co-curricular Program, 2005).⁶ PACE operated under a waiver for federal accountability testing requirements from 2014–2015 to 2018–2019. At this time, PACE does not operate as an assessment system for accountability, but rather as a tool to support classroom instructional practices and student learning.

Implementation

New Hampshire's PACE and now NH PLACE have relied on locally administered and locally developed performance assessments that are aligned with grade bands and course competencies. The early goal for PACE was to replace the large-scale assessment system in New Hampshire, and its implementation included an opt-in for districts to participate in the PACE system. Districts who applied and fully committed to the PACE system agreed to administer common performance assessments for specific grades and/or subjects in addition to local assessments. At the time, the common performance assessment was used to compare district performance over time and to allow educators to collaborate in developing meaningful

⁶ Although New Hampshire piloted competency-based education in several high schools prior to this, we note the time period where this became law.

assessments in their classrooms. New Hampshire allowed for a varying degree of district participation based on participation levels. Level 1 districts fully implemented PACE as part of their accountability systems by collaboratively developing the assessments, working with external experts to ensure high-quality rubrics and scoring, then field-testing, implementing, and refining those assessments each year. Other levels participated in different components of PACE, such as professional development, but didn't have to commit to the accountability system. The shift from PACE to NH PLACE moved the emphasis from an accountability system to one that focuses on performance learning in the classroom, more professional development and collaboration among teachers and district and school leaders, and more student agency and choice in the classroom (which then emerges in the assessments).

Definition

Performance assessments are multi-step assignments with clear criteria, expectations, and processes which measure how well a student transfers and applies knowledge and complex skills to create or refine an original product and/or solution. This can include portfolios, exhibitions, student-led committees, or other performance tasks.

Relevant Subjects/Grades

PACE districts combined the statewide assessment system, common performance tasks, and other course-specific or local performance tasks. The statewide tests were administered in grade 3 English language arts (ELA); grade 4 math; grade 8 ELA and math; and grade 11 ELA, math, and science. The move to NH PLACE allows teachers in any grade or subject combination to participate in professional development and task design each year.

Scoring Process

Under PACE, common and local tasks were scored using teacher-developed rubrics, which describe student work and evidence at different competencies (Becker et al., 2017). The scoring process for common tasks involved teachers field-testing the tasks, revising them, and then scoring student work. The rubrics were then revised to ensure inaccuracies or vagaries were addressed. Scoring also involved a generalizability analysis by the Center for Assessment, who conducted cross-district comparability analyses that were critical for accountability purposes (Becker et al., 2017; Evans & Lyons, 2017).

Supports Provided

The New Hampshire Learning Initiative is the intermediary primarily responsible for the professional learning and facilitation of performance task development.

Oregon: Tier 1

History

Oregon's early history with performance-based assessments began in the 1990s when Oregon passed legislation allowing students to pursue and receive a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and a Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM). Each of these options allowed local school districts to develop their own assessments for certain subject areas, including through work samples. Though these certificates did not ultimately achieve the intended implementation and achievement outcomes, the legislation laid the foundation for the performance-based assessment requirement that now stands in Oregon (Smith & Sherrell, 1996). In 2011, Oregon's legislature passed new legislation for graduation requirements that required high school students to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills and called on districts to administer a local performance assessment in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school.

Relevant Policy/Legislation

Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 581-22-0615 outlines the Assessment of Essential Skills, which includes the requirement that school districts and charter schools administer a local performance assessment for students in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school (Assessment of Essential Skills, 2011). The local performance assessments must assess writing, speaking, mathematical problem-solving, and scientific inquiry. Oregon suspended the requirement for Oregon students to demonstrate proficiency during the pandemic through 2024.

Implementation

According to Oregon legislation, Oregon districts must administer a local performance assessment annually for students in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school. Each local performance assessment must be standardized, use a common scoring instrument, be embedded in the school curriculum, and evaluate students' knowledge and skills in math, science, speaking, and/or writing.

Definition

Local Performance Assessments, as outlined in Oregon statute, is an umbrella term that encompasses many performance tasks. However, Oregon also has a specific definition for Work Samples, which are included as an example of a local performance assessment if it is used to measure Oregon's Essential Skills. Work Samples have more rigid administration conditions and must be scored using the State Scoring Guide (Oregon Department of Education, 2016).

Relevant Subjects/Grades

Local performance assessments are administered in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school. Performance assessments are also an option for high school students to demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills. Students may opt to use a local assessment option or a Work Sample (see Definition, above, for distinction) in lieu of Oregon’s Statewide Assessment or another standardized assessment (Oregon Department of Education, 2016). This applies to the following Essential Skills:

- Read and comprehend a variety of text.
- Write clearly and accurately.
- Apply mathematics in a variety of settings.

Other Essential Skills may also be assessed using a local performance assessment, such as thinking critically, using technology, civic and community engagement, and global literacy (Oregon Department of Education, 2016).

Scoring Process

Work Samples used to assess proficiency in Essential Skills must use the state-developed scoring guide. Oregon Department of Education provides options for scoring responses to questions (e.g., teachers scoring their own students’ work, scoring an anonymous selection of work, student work scored by a third-party) (Oregon Department of Education, 2016). Districts are also encouraged to use the state scoring guide for local performance assessments other than the Work Samples, though it is not required.

Supports Provided

The Oregon Department of Education provides tools and resources to educators via its website. There is a bank of Work Sample prompts for each content area, along with student anchor papers and the scoring guide. Additionally, there are official state scoring-guide training modules to assist with task development and scoring. The Oregon Department of Education relies on the Educational Service Districts (ESDs) to provide local professional development and support to the districts and schools that each of them serves.

Rhode Island: Tier 1

History

In 2003, Rhode Island became the first state in the country to establish a proficiency-based diploma through its Diploma System (Sturgis, 2017). The system required that students demonstrate proficiency in a set of courses and that two performance assessments be

completed. Under the current Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements, students are awarded a diploma based on proficiency of coursework in six content areas, which may include performance-based assessments (such as a senior project, capstone, portfolio, or exhibition) (Rhode Island Department of Education, n.d.). In 2017, the Rhode Island Learning Champions developed cross-curricular performance indicators, scoring criteria, and student anchor work that could be shared with educators across the state (Rhode Island Department of Education, n.d.).

Relevant Policy/Legislation

The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approved the Diploma System in 2003 and the Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements in 2016. These policies are governed under the Secondary School Regulations (Rhode Island Department of Education, 2022). In 2022, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approved updated regulations to rethink high school graduation requirements. At this time, performance assessments are not a requirement, though local districts and schools can implement them for students to demonstrate proficiency.

Implementation

Performance assessments were initially used as a requirement for graduation under the Diploma System in 2003. While performance assessments have been used as a requirement in Rhode Island in the past, this was never used to withhold a diploma from students. Rhode Island did not maintain the requirement for performance assessments to graduate but has allowed districts and schools to use performance assessments as an indicator for mastery under their proficiency-based system. As a result, some local districts have performance assessment requirements while others do not.

Definition

Rhode Island does not have a publicly available definition of performance assessment, but the website references senior projects, portfolios, capstone products, and exhibitions as examples of successful performance-based assessment systems (Rhode Island Department of Education, n.d.).

Relevant Subjects/Grades

The Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements outline the core content and mastery experiences for students in high schools (grades 9 through 12). Performance assessments are not required for students to demonstrate mastery in certain grades or subject areas.

Scoring Process

The Rhode Island has not adopted statewide scoring processes or criteria, as districts are not required to implement performance assessments. A product of the Rhode Island Learning

Champions work included scoring criteria for districts to use when implementing performance assessments, though it is not clear how many districts are using the criteria and with what fidelity (Rhode Island Department of Education, n.d.).

Supports Provided

The Rhode Island Department of Education offers resources developed under the Rhode Island Learning Champions initiative. The state agency does not currently offer other professional learning to districts for developing, administering, or scoring performance assessments. Districts tend to collaborate with each other by sharing performance assessment resources and processes.

Virginia: Tier 1

History

In 2014, the Virginia Assembly enacted legislation that eliminated five standardized assessments that were required by all students in the state. Rather than administering the Standards of Learning (SOL) test, as was traditionally required in those subjects and grade levels, the state required that local school districts include local alternative assessments, which may include performance assessments (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.). In 2019, the Virginia Department of Education also encouraged each school district to develop Balanced Assessment Plans outlining the type of assessment used for all course content and subjects, with an eye to examining the breadth of assessments required for all students and identifying those that do not serve instructional purposes, are redundant, or might be replaced by new assessments that can more accurately measure content and skills (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.).

Relevant Policy/Legislation

Legislation adopted by the 2014 General Assembly amended § 22.1-253.13:3.C of the Code of Virginia to eliminate state-administered standardized tests for grade 3 history and science, grade 5 writing, U.S. history to 1865, and U.S. history from 1865 to the present (Virginia Department of Education, 2021). Instead of the SOL assessment, the legislation required that each district administer locally administered assessments, which may include performance assessments. Each local school board must annually certify that it provides instruction and administers an alternative assessment, consistent with Virginia Board of Education guidelines, to students in grades 3 through 8 in each SOL subject area in which the SOL assessment was eliminated (Accreditation, Other Standards, Assessments, and Releases from State Regulations, 2014).

Implementation

Virginia only requires local alternative assessments for primary grades and does not require performance assessments for high school graduation or for federal or state accountability purposes. However, the Virginia Department of Education allows districts to provide an option for a local performance assessment to verify high school English credits (one credit in reading and one credit in writing). The Virginia Department of Education requires that local school boards certify the instruction and assessments for the required grades and content areas. In 2019, the Department began encouraging districts to complete a Balanced Assessment Plan. Additionally, the Department conducts annual desk reviews of a sample of districts each year to provide accountability and technical assistance to districts. When legislation was originally enacted, the change from standardized testing to a local alternative assessment was immediate and statewide. Since then, the Department has provided more clarity on the guidelines and built more capacity by bringing in external groups to help districts with their Balanced Assessment Plans and provide districts with a review tool to understand how to measure the quality of their performance assessments.

Definition

According to the Virginia Department of Education Assessment Literacy Glossary, performance assessment “generally requires students to perform a task or create a product and is scored using a rubric or set of criteria. In completing the task, students apply acquired knowledge and skills. This type of assessment often includes a written component” (Virginia Department of Education, 2019).

Relevant Subjects/Grades

Local school districts are required to implement local alternative assessments, which may include performance assessments, in grade 3 science, grade 3 history, grade 5 writing, U.S. history to 1865, and U.S. history from 1865 to the present. The Virginia Department of Education also allows school districts to opt into state-developed performance assessments for history, social science, and English in other grade levels.

Scoring Process

Assessments are locally-developed but scored using a statewide tool. The Virginia Department of Education provides a common scoring rubric as well as the Virginia Quality Review Tool which allows for examining the quality of each performance assessment.

Supports Provided

Virginia Department of Education’s website provides a breadth of tools and resources for districts to use. Local school districts are encouraged to use the state-developed resources

provided on the Department’s website. Virginia Department of Education does not provide a bank of performance assessments but encourages districts to share performance assessments with each other.

Massachusetts: Tier 2

History

The Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) was formed in 2016 with six districts to build a new model of assessment and a schoolwide accountability system that “offers a more dynamic picture of student learning and school quality than a single standardized test” (MCIEA, n.d.). MCIEA provides intermediary support to build the capacity of school district administrators, building-level administrators, and teachers to create high-quality, performance assessments that are embedded into the curriculum and generated by teachers in the classroom. Since its inception, MCIEA has grown from six to eight districts, with the governing board consisting of superintendents or their designees, as well as teachers’ union presidents, ensuring teacher involvement in decision making. MCIEA is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and partners with the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Relevant Policy/Legislation

In 1993, Massachusetts enacted the Education Reform Act, which resulted in the development and administration of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), a set of standardized tests in ELA, math, and science. MCIEA proposes to move away from standardized tests toward a more robust measure of student learning, such as performance assessments.

Implementation

MCIEA is not a state-driven effort but, rather, operates as a grassroots partnership with voluntary support for partner districts. MCIEA’s goal is to work with schools, districts, and communities to “create a humanistic accountability system that is grounded in educational equity” (Beyond Test Scores Project, n.d.). Within partner districts, curriculum-embedded performance assessments are the primary measure of student learning. Districts undergo a year-long institute with coaching, cross-district support, and dedicated resources for the development and implementation of performance assessments. MCIEA also launched a Performance Assessment Task Bank, which allows consortium teachers to submit and access a range of performance tasks created by teachers within the consortium. Some districts have MCIEA district-led teams comprising instructional coaches or other instructional leaders to support and oversee the work.

Definition

Performance assessment consists of

- an extended task in which students have opportunities for sense-making and problem-solving and/or original thinking in the context of a phenomenon or unresolved question;
- a method of capturing student work that is open-ended and generative, designed to represent not only a solution, but also the student thinking that underlies that solution; and
- evaluation criteria that describe how different aspects of students' work can be connected to substantive conclusions about what they know and can do.

Relevant Subjects/Grades

MCIEA advocates for performance assessments at all grade levels and subjects. Consortium interviewees noted that the lower grades are the most difficult to implement because most of the curriculum is skills-based.

Scoring Process

MCIEA works with districts during the year-long institutes to develop scoring processes that generate high inter-rater reliability and promote high-quality performance assessments.

Supports Provided

The University of Massachusetts at Lowell is the primary vehicle for the supports provided to partner districts. Each district has also built enough performance assessment capacity that teacher leaders now provide some of the coaching to other in-district teachers. After a three-year pause due to the pandemic, starting in summer 2023 MCIEA will renew its year-long cohorts of professional development and direct coaching to partner districts that request it.

Vermont: Tier 2

History

Vermont supports the development of performance-based assessments and in the coming year will work with educators to develop additional resources focused on statewide implementation of high-quality performance assessments within Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems.

In 2016, sample sets of graduation proficiencies that are specific to academic content areas (e.g., math, English, science), and sample graduation proficiencies for transferable skills that

cross content areas (e.g., effective communication, creative and practical problem-solving) were created to support the implementation of both Act 77 and the Vermont Education Quality Standards. The Vermont Agency of Education has undertaken a revision process to improve the requirements by collaborating with educators in the field to determine the essential knowledge and skills that students need to graduate from high school. This process involved constructing overarching Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements (PBGRs) that reflect what it means to be literate in a content area, identifying Critical Proficiencies aligned with PBGRs, and creating Priority Performance Indicators that will be taught and assessed. The number of indicators has been significantly reduced to support depth of learning rather than breadth. Additionally, quality criteria documents have been established for reviewing and refining these components of the Vermont Framework for Proficiency.

In terms of performance assessments, the Vermont Agency of Education aims to work with educators to construct assessments that are aligned with Priority Performance Indicators. The plan is to involve content experts in developing the assessments, conduct calibration exercises to ensure consistent scoring, and make the assessments available statewide. The process of building performance assessments is scheduled to begin in January 2024, with a focus on developing assessments that require students to apply knowledge and skills to new situations and demonstrate their level of understanding.

Relevant Policy/Legislation

In Vermont, the importance of performance assessments is reflected in the State Board of Education Rules 2000, the Education Quality Standards. These rules require high school diplomas to be awarded based on demonstrations of proficiency. The Education Quality Standards also require that high-quality assessment systems employ a balance of assessment types, including but not limited to teacher- or student-designed assessments, portfolios, performances, exhibitions, and projects. Additionally, Act 77 states that flexible pathways to graduation are “any combination of high-quality academic and experiential components leading to secondary school completion and postsecondary readiness, which may include assessments that allow the student to apply his or her knowledge and skills to tasks that are of interest to that student” (Act 77: Flexible Pathways Initiative, 2013).

Implementation

Prior to the pandemic, the Vermont Agency of Education facilitated convenings around the state to support the development of high-quality Comprehensive Local Assessment Systems. The issue brief *Strengthening Local Assessment Systems for Personalized, Proficiency-Based Education: Strategies and Tools for Professional Learning* (Fitzsimmons, 2020) describes this work and the role of performance assessments within a proficiency-based system. During the 2020–2021 school year, the Agency facilitated virtual sessions focused on project-based learning and documented that process to share with the field. Performance assessments,

a natural component of project-based learning, allow learners to be assessed in engaging and authentic ways. In 2021, the Agency released the document *Essential Components for Ensuring Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems Are Culturally Relevant and Equitable* (Vermont Agency of Education, 2021), which includes a variety of resources to ensure that assessments are culturally relevant and equitable for all learners. Performance assessments provide a critical opportunity for students to reflect and share their personal experiences and identities as learners. As of January 2023, the Agency contracted with Great Schools Partnership to continue a focus on performance assessments that will begin in January 2024, after the Proficiency-Based Graduation Hierarchies are finalized.

Definition

N/A

Relevant Subjects/Grades

N/A

Scoring Process

N/A

Supports Provided

N/A

Appendix B: Case Study State Interview Protocol

[Foundational question] Is there a common definition of performance assessments in your state?

- 1.** Describe the history of performance-based assessments in your state, including the initial rationale for implementing performance assessment and how that may have changed over time.
 - a.** How long have performance assessments been used in your state? Have there been any interruptions?
 - b.** Describe relevant policy or legislation related to performance assessments in your state, districts, and networks.
 - c.** Can you describe what the early goals were for performance assessment, and how those goals have changed or evolved over time?
- 2.** What role do performance assessments play in your state assessment system?
 - a.** (Probe: the categories from Stosich and others [2018], minus federal accountability)
 - i.** Is it used for state (as opposed to federal) school or educator accountability? (This category includes replacing state tests with performance tasks and/or allowing performance assessments in nontested grades/subjects.)
 - ii.** For graduation?
 - iii.** For classroom purposes?
 - b.** What types of performance assessments or tasks are permitted or required?
 - c.** How are performance assessments developed? Assessed for quality?
 - d.** Describe how rubrics are created for assessing student work under performance assessments.
 - i.** (Probe: state/local/educator)
 - ii.** How did you develop the rubrics? What guided that work or decision-making process?

- e. To what extent are the needs of special student populations (e.g., ELs, SWDs) supported and addressed with respect to the use of performance assessments? If supported and addressed, what are the strategies or supports used? Describe.
- 3. Describe how performance assessments are aligned with curriculum, instruction, and learning standards.
 - a. To what extent were there changes in learning standards and/or curriculum in order to ensure performance assessments were embedded? If changes were made, describe the process. Were learning standards, curriculum, and/or instruction changed first?
 - b. To what extent are instruction and performance assessment mutually reinforcing?
- 4. What resources and supports are provided to districts and schools for implementing performance assessments and/or implementing new standards to support performance assessments?
 - a. Describe how teachers and school administrators can receive professional learning or support regarding performance assessments or instructional approaches.
 - b. What do you see as the “key shifts” for teachers, school leaders, and district leaders in moving to instruction aligned to performance assessments, and what strategies best support them in making those shifts, including providing opportunities for collaboration?
 - c. Were shifts needed in school operations or schedules in order to support performance assessment?
 - d. Describe resources and supports provided to engage families regarding performance assessment (e.g., changes in score reporting, assessment literacy info).
- 5. What are three main lessons learned that you can share for other states embarking on this journey?
 - a. What challenges has your state faced in implementing performance assessments?
 - b. What would you have done differently?
 - c. What successes do you see or have you seen? Is there evidence that implementing performance assessments is supporting your state’s and network’s goals?

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