College and Career Readiness
Why Current Standards Require Better Assessment

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College and Career Readiness: Why current standards require better assessments

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Presenters today

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Students and parents want

- A consistent testing program
- Item types they’ve seen before
- Results they can understand in context
- Connection with a college and career readiness measure
Teachers want

- Timely reporting to inform instruction
- Support for teaching and learning in the classroom and at home
- Data on instructional needs and grouping possibilities in real time
District leaders want

- Consistent measurement of growth toward college and career readiness standards
- Early predictions about students’ academic progress
- Connected, coherent assessments
- An evidence-based, reliable, and valid testing program
Agenda

- College and career readiness
- Multi-dimensional intent of the standards
- Effective questions to elicit evidence of learning
- What does better assessment look like?
- eMPower Assessments
College and Career Readiness
College and Career Readiness

- Academic indicators
- Assessments
- Experiences
- Behaviors
In 2 years...
Jobs requiring postsecondary

65%
Jobs requiring postsecondary: STEM

92%
But many require remediation

33%
College and career readiness challenges

“If I wait until high school to measure college and career readiness, it’s already too late.”

“We don’t have a coherent system to measure learning consistently from beginning to end, K–12.”

“I want our students to be comfortable with high-rigor testing, so they can do their best when it counts.”

“The interim test we’re using today gives us a score but it mostly addresses simple recall-type learning.”
Multi-dimensional intent of the standards
**Interim assessment purpose**

- Identify students’ strengths and needs
- Help teachers plan instruction
- Measure progress toward end-of-year goals
Interim assessment challenge

Standards represented on interim test
Standards represented on state test

Academic standards
What can be demonstrated on item-level computer-adaptive tests

Intent of state’s standards: readiness for college and careers

What can be demonstrated on discrete test items
Effective questions to elicit evidence of learning
Rigorous development processes

Authoring
- Develop Stimuli
  - Find passages and graphics and get permissions
  - Determine complexity level
- Create items
  - Follow Universal and evidence-centered design principles
  - Develop graphics
  - Create key or scoring guide and rubric
  - Considerations: alignment to standards, cognitive rigor, student engagement
- Conduct peer review
  - Content accuracy
  - Construct validity
  - Authentic contexts

External Review (Classroom or Committee)
- Verify grade level appropriateness, rigor, and alignment to standards
- Check bias, accessibility and sensitivity
- Review key or scoring guide and rubric

Content Revision
- Refine constructs
- Finalize key and rubrics
- Consider potential accommodations
- Finalize content and graphics

Editorial Review
- Readability
- Comprehensibility
- Lack of ambiguity
- Grammar
- Language sensitivity
- Format and presentation

Tech Team QC
- Delivery format
- Item part
- Content rendering
- QTI packaging

Publish

Measured Progress is a certified WebbAlign DOK partner.
Item comparison: Reading

Less effective

Read the story.
The lights went out, and people at the costume ball stopped dancing. They spoke in whispers. Then a guest dressed as a lion tamer cried aloud, "Watch out!" Polly screamed. (passage continues)

Who is most likely the thief in this story?
1. the lion tamer
2. Polly
3. Detective Cutler
4. the pirate

More effective

Commissioned paragraph
Short, standalone
Skills measured in isolation

Passage 2
The King's Journey
by Betsy Sterman

1. There was once a king who ruled over vast lands. Every spring he journeyed round his kingdom to visit his people.
2. A long, hard journey it was.
3. At the end of one such trip, he sighed and said, "Oh, what a fine reward I would give to anyone who could shorten my journey."
4. Sir Highteather Bragg, the vainest man in the kingdom, pictured himself wearing a great glittering medal.
5. "What you need is a new coach, Sire," he said. "I will have one made for you."
6. The following April, Sir Highteather drove an elegant open carriage to the palace.
7. "This is the swiftest carriage in all the land," Sir Highteather said proudly. "A dozen men worked a dozen months to make speed its very name. It will surely shorten your journey, Sire."
8. Before long the wheels spun out of control on

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

In Passage 2, what is the main problem the King tries to solve?

- A. It takes too long to travel through his lands.
- B. The roads are not fit for traveling.
- C. His subjects do not amuse him.
- D. He knows very few people.

Which detail from the passage best supports the answer to the question above?

- A. "This is the swiftest carriage in all the land," Sir Highteather said proudly.
- B. "Ohhh," he groaned. "What a great reward I would give to anyone who could shorten my journey."
- C. "The bridges were in ruins, their planks ripped apart and their ropes whipping in the wind."

Authentic texts
Richer, well-paired passages
Scientific or historical content
Item comparison: Writing and Language

Less effective

Celine is writing a story about a trip to the train station. Her teacher said to use words that describe the sounds at the train station.

Which sentence should Celine add to her story?

✓ 1. An engine thundered down the track and clattered to a stop.
2. Two children waited on a bench and played with their toys.
3. A man rushed through the station carrying a big suitcase.
4. The conductor lifted a suitcase up the steps of the train.

More effective

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Great Aunt Lily’s Attic

Characters
a lamp
a photo album
a rocking chair
Great Aunt Lily
Sara, Aunt Lily’s niece
Jackson, Aunt Lily’s nephew

Setting
1. The scene is Great Aunt Lily’s attic. 2. An old photo album lies on the seat of the chair. 3. An old lamp with a glass colorful shade rests nearby on the floor.
4. Album: (addressing the chair) Who was here and left the shade up?
5. Chair: It was Great Aunt Lily’s niece and nephew, Sara and Jackson. 6. I felt them walk across the floor as I was asleep. 7. That got me rocking, and I woke up.
8. Lamp: (crying) Since we’ve been stuck in the attic, all we do is sleep.
9. Chair: I know it! 10. Do you recall when we used to be in the living room?
11. Lamp: Those were such enjoyable times.
12. Album: Do you remember when Great Aunt Lily would show the old family pictures to the children?
13. Lamp: There was never a dull minute then.
14. Chair: She used to sit down in me with one or two of them in her lap.

Which sentence should be added after sentence 26 to make the best ending for the passage?

A. Chair: It’ll be nice to be part of the family again!
B. Chair: I wonder if the living room has changed much.
C. Chair: I can’t wait to not be covered in dust anymore!
D. Chair: It’ll be hard to not miss the peace and quiet a little.

Which detail from the passage best supports the answer above?

A. “That got me rocking, and I woke up.”
B. “Do you recall when we used to be in the living room?”
C. “Album: I wish we were back in the living room with the family.”

No context
Identifies vocabulary only
Standalone item

Context of the work
Writing and editing skills
Approach mirrors the PSAT
Item comparison: Mathematics

**Less effective**

- Single dimension
- No context
- Not engaging

**More effective**

- Multi-dimensional
- Real-world purpose
- Includes math practice

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**Question:** What is the area of the figure?

A. 18 square units
B. 9 square units
C. 20 square units
D. 16 square units
E. 5 square units

**Diagram:**

Ms. Sanchez teaches science in a classroom at the corner of the school. Her students will plant wildflowers outside her classroom in a garden represented by the figure above. Five students tried to find the area of the garden.

- [Table for area calculations]

Which two students work and answer are correct?

A. Kelly
B. Trina
C. Sandy
D. Won
E. Bob
What does better assessment look like?
Council of Great City Schools research

“…many mandatory tests are not well aligned to each other or with any college- or career-ready standards…and do not actually test a student’s knowledge.”

GOOD TESTS MEASURE WHAT MATTERS MOST

- Probes students’ writing, problem solving and critical thinking skills
- Aligns fully to grade-level expectations for what students should know and be able to do and expectations for what students need for success after high school
- Measures a range of performance, including moderate and high-performing students, not just the average
- Employs a variety of test question types (such as multiple choice, multi-step problems, short answer where students explain/justify their conclusion, extensive writing) well-matched to the skills and knowledge being measured
- Uses excerpts from actual research journals, famous essays and literature for students to read and analyze
- Allows nearly all students to demonstrate what they know and can do regardless of whether they have special learning needs or language barriers (using innovations such as pop-up word glossaries, options for simplified formats and questions in multiple languages)
- Reflects great teaching and strong instructional practices that should be used in classrooms

IMPORTANT FACT
Studies show not all state tests meet these criteria. So don’t just trust—verify.

Sources: Criteria adapted from Council of Chief State School Officers (see http://www.ccsse.org/resources/programs/assessments.html) and National Network of State Teachers of the Year (see nnstoy.org).
Alignment

The degree to which an assessment and its items address the expectations and outcomes described in the academic standards

If assessments at all levels are well aligned to the same standards, they form a coherent system.
Reliability

Clear and well-communicated expectations that yield consistency in performance

Sufficient evidence to support decisions about students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities

Validity

Alignment of assessment to valued knowledge, skills, and abilities

Alignment of performance to grade-level expectations as measured by the standards
Reliable, Not Valid

Reliable and Valid
Why we built eMPower Assessments

- New college and career readiness standards
- Pressure on districts to minimize testing time
- Move to use college entrance exams for statewide accountability
A coherent approach to college and career readiness
What are eMPower Assessments?

- Interim and summative assessments for grades 3–8
- Provide a direct predictive connection to the SAT Suite
- Show growth over time
- Built to college and career readiness standards
- Help you create a consistent approach
eMPower offers interim assessment

Standards Assessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous Grade Level</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Interim</td>
<td>Interim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Test administration times

- **Reading**: 40 minutes
- **Writing and Language**: 25 minutes
- **Mathematics**: 35 minutes

Times are per session. 2 sessions per subject area.
Built for strong measurement

**evidence-based**
- Follows evidence centered design principles
- Ensures items align to content standards
- Created with new items

**reliable**
- Meets test design standards for reliability
- Reports proficiency levels consistently

**valid**
- Built to measure progress toward college and career readiness standards
- Enables meaningful inferences from test scores
What makes eMPower better?

- Developed for college and career readiness
- Created with all new content, fully aligned to standards
- Uses authentic, complex texts for reading (longer passages)
- Measures mathematical practices in addition to concepts and procedures
- Provides consistency with the SAT Suite of Assessments: similar content standards, levels of cognitive demand, and item and passage types
The eMPower Assessments results give us a baseline and good information to drive instruction. Once students take the test again, it will be useful to see whether or not they grow and in what areas.

-Administrator for eMPower Assessments early adopter district in Illinois
Questions?

empowerSAT.measuredprogress.org
It’s all about student learning.

Thank you!

measuredprogress.org/empower