



**SOUTHERN
LEGISLATIVE
CONFERENCE
OF
THE COUNCIL
OF STATE
GOVERNMENTS**

© Copyright November 2015



Just three years ago, almost every state in the nation belonged to a national testing consortium, such as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) whereas, today, barely half continue to participate in these multi-state comparative student assessments.¹ The Southern region, in particular, has seen a shift away from the national testing consortia to state-specified student testing. As state education systems adapt to their new educational standards of college- and career-readiness, state governments continue to modify their approach to assessing student learning toward these standards.

As the reauthorization of the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) – last reauthorized in 2002 as the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) – continues to be debated, the greater student testing requirements implemented by NCLB presumably will continue as its lasting legacy. Even with state governments receiving increased flexibility for their student assessment systems, it is unlikely that testing requirements will be eliminated completely. Whatever the final outcome of the ESEA rewrite negotiations may be, states probably will have to maintain or establish clear guidelines to measure the performance of their students in relation to the learning goals set by their educational governing bodies.

Prior to NCLB, state governments were required to test public school students only three times during their K-12 tenure. A primary component of NCLB, signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002, was a requirement that, by the 2005-06 school year, every state would have to implement an assessment system to determine reading and mathematics skills of students every year in grades 3-8, and once again in grade 10, 11, or 12. Further, for the general student population and by the 2007-09 school year, science skills had to be measured three times: once in grades 3-5, again in grades 6-9, and once more in grades 10-12. Student assessments for all other subject areas were allowed but not required.² State implementation of the NCLB yearly testing requirements has varied, especially given that the federal law did not dictate any specific learning goals that states must adopt.

While the original provisions of NCLB did not dictate any specific educational standards that states should adopt for testing purposes, on September 23, 2011, almost four years after NCLB’s expiration on September 30, 2007, and continued Congressional inaction, the U.S. Department of Education announced a plan that would offer state waivers from its provisions. However, the waivers came with the stipulation that states must adopt “college- and career-ready [educational] standards for all students, [develop] differentiated accountability systems, and [undertake] reforms to support effective classroom instruction and school leadership.”³

SERVING THE SOUTH

THE SOUTHERN OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
 P.O. Box 98129 | Atlanta, Georgia 30359
 ph: 404/633-1866 | fx: 404/633-4896 | www.slcatlanta.org

As of September 24, 2015, 43 states (including every SLC member state), the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico had submitted requests and were approved for NCLB waivers by the U.S. Department of Education.⁴

Education standards invariably are tied to student testing, and states' adoption of college- and career-ready standards led to the development of student assessment systems aligned with those standards. In that vein, since 2011, many state education systems have undergone drastic changes in how their college- and career-ready standards are defined and how students are assessed in relation to them.^A For example, in Missouri, Peter Herschend, president of the Missouri Board of Education, has indicated that students in his state have been assessed with "four separate testing systems over four years."⁵

As the tables in the following pages depict, student assessments in the South vary greatly. After dismissing PARCC and Smarter Balanced, several states' education systems began, and currently continue, a transition to various alternatives. This *SLC Regional Resource* provides an overview of the strategies that SLC member states have undertaken for student testing, as of October 1, 2015. Specifically, the analysis examines the current status of K-12 testing requirements implemented by the 15 SLC member states for their general public school populations and the experiences of these states as they seek to improve their student performance measurement systems. Of note, this report does not contain information related to state requirements for advanced placement exams, English-language learners, special education students, home-schooled children, federal student assessments (i.e., the National Assessment of Educational Progress), school accreditation standards, teacher evaluation regulations, or the wide array of other education issue areas closely related to student assessments. Rather, the report focuses on the many adjustments and changes to K-12 English language arts and mathematics student assessment systems implemented by Southern states in the post-Common Core educational era, geared toward preparing college- and career-ready students.

^A The most significant movement, and ensuing counter-movement, related to educational standards has been the adoption of the Common Core of State Standards, originally developed and promoted by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, by state education governing bodies. For a review of the status of Common Core in Southern states as of December 2014, please see the *SLC Regional Resource, Common Core in the South: Where the States Stand Now* at <http://slcatlanta.org/Publications/Education/CommonCore.pdf>.

Alabama

Originally a member of both PARCC and Smarter Balanced, Alabama withdrew from both national student testing consortiums in early 2013.⁶ In order to continue student testing in alignment with its College- and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS), the state became the first to adopt ACT Aspire for testing children in grades 3-8, starting in 2014.⁷ For the 2015-16 school year, administration of ACT Aspire assessments will be expanded to include grade 10.

According to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), ACT Aspire will test student performance in English, reading, writing, mathematics, and science. While reading and mathematics will be tested in grades 3-8, science will be tested in grades 5 and 7 only. In grade 10, students will be tested on their proficiency in all of the five aforementioned disciplines. The ACT Aspire assessments tout several unique features: modules that allow flexibility for testing schedules; multiple choice and written response questions; the option of computer or paper-based formats; and alignment with both ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and CCRS.⁸

In addition to ACT Aspire for grades 3-8 and 10, the state administers The ACT with an additional writing component to students in grade 11. The ACT Plus Writing assessment ensures that students have completed at least one exam accepted by four-year colleges and universities in the United States. Additionally, the state will be able to use the assessment to track student performance with aggregate and standards-based reporting past high school; improve the college- and career-readiness of its students; and collect further information about the alignment of The ACT and CCRS.⁹

Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, the Department has required the administration of ACT WorkKeys in grade 12, designed to measure foundational cognitive and non-cognitive skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century workforce.¹⁰ Meanwhile, during the 2015-16 school year, the Department will give schools and districts the option to administer ACT QualityCore end-of-course (EOC) assessments for Algebra I and English 9 or 10.¹¹

With regard to school entry assessments, on May 11, 2015, ALSDE announced a partnership with the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs to pilot a Kindergarten Entry

Overview of ACT-Aligned Student Assessments

The ACT: a curriculum- and standards-based educational and career planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college. The ACT is one of two entry exams generally required by colleges and universities in the United States to determine students' qualifications for admission into their institution. (The other commonly accepted college entry exam is the SAT.)

ACT Aspire: a vertically-scaled assessment suite for measuring student proficiencies in English, mathematics, reading, science and writing from grade 3 through early high school. ACT Aspire assessments are aligned to both ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and individual state academic standards; include multiple choice, constructed response and technology-enhanced items; and can be used to predict student outcomes on The ACT and create personal needs profiles for students on an individual education plan. The ACT Aspire assessment suite includes classroom, interim, and summative end-of-grade assessments, but states, districts, and schools primarily use the summative component to measure college- and career-readiness. References to ACT Aspire in this *SLC Regional Resource* are references to the summative end-of-grade ACT Aspire assessments.

ACT Explore: a student assessment usually administered in grade 8 or 9 that tests students' English, mathematics, reading and science skills; queries them on academic and career-oriented interests; identifies areas of academic strength and weakness; and provides guidance for educational and career planning. ACT is in the process of replacing ACT Explore with ACT Aspire, and only supports the assessment to the extent required by pre-existing contractual obligations.

ACT Plan: an assessment usually administered in grade 10 to measure college-readiness and provide a strong indication of future student scores on The ACT. ACT is in the process of replacing ACT Plan with ACT Aspire, and only supports the assessment to the extent required by pre-existing contractual obligations.

ACT WorkKeys: a student assessment generally administered toward the end of high school that measures job-related skills such as reading, mathematics, listening, locating information, and teamwork to help students understand how they can improve their skills, increase their wages, and succeed in the 21st century workforce. High school students who complete the three components of ACT WorkKeys earn an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate demonstrating one of four score-based levels of proficiency.

ACT Compass: an untimed, computer-adaptive test used primarily by colleges and universities to determine if students should be placed in credit-bearing or developmental^A courses. After a thorough analysis of customer feedback, empirical evidence and postsecondary trends, ACT has decided to phase out ACT Compass by December 31, 2016.

ACT QualityCore: a series of end-of-course assessments designed to be administered at the completion of selected English, mathematics, science, and U.S. history high school courses. ACT QualityCore assessments are aligned with unique, deeper and more detailed educational standards than other ACT-aligned student assessment mechanisms.

Source: Act, Incorporated <http://www.act.org/> (accessed October 13, 2015).

^A Developmental college courses are those designed to teach students the knowledge they must have to succeed in regular college-level coursework. Students in developmental courses do not earn college credit.

Assessment program for interested schools.¹² Teachers who choose to participate in the voluntary testing program will be able to do so in the 2015-16 school year, and will receive a stipend, professional development training, and an iPad. Given wide-ranging agreement, school districts, individual schools, and teacher groups also have the option to participate in the administration of the kindergarten-readiness assessments.¹³

The state also requires local education agencies (LEAs) to assess students in grades K-2, and provides resources for testing grades beyond the requirement. For K-2, LEAs have the option to use one of two versions of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or select another formative assessment system for measuring early literacy skills. Student performance data for DIBELS is entered into a statewide database with support from ALSDE,

whereas schools using other assessments are not required to report their results to the Department.¹⁴

Arkansas

Originally a member of PARCC, the state Board of Education, under the direction of Governor Asa Hutchinson, voted in July 2015 to change the public school system's testing provider to ACT. Although the Board originally resisted leaving PARCC, a final report from the governor's Council on Common Core Review and a newly reconstituted Board voted to make the transition.¹⁵ The Common Core State Standards remain the basis of student learning goals for English language arts and mathematics.¹⁶

Starting with the 2015-16 school year, schools will administer ACT Aspire for students in grades 3-10, testing them in English, reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Students in grade 11 will have the option to take The ACT free of charge and have the scores sent directly to colleges and universities of their choice.^{17,18}

Arkansas continues to use the Qualls Early Learning Inventory, a questionnaire based on teacher observations, to measure the general knowledge, oral communication, written language, mathematic concepts, work habits, and attentive behavior of kindergarten students and any first grade student who did not attend kindergarten.^{19,20} The state also requires the administration of the Iowa Assessments, a set of multiple choice reading comprehension and mathematic tests, to students in grades 1 and 2. Student performance on these tests is compared to a reference group representing the national norm and used to identify students who may require additional instruction in science, English language arts, or mathematics.²¹

Florida

From 2011 to 2014, the state used the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test to measure student performance in relation to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) in reading, mathematics, and writing.²² Under the executive order of Governor Rick Scott, the state withdrew from PARCC in September 2013.²³ In February 2014, the state Board of Education unanimously approved new Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS) and Mathematics Florida Standards (MAFS).²⁴ To replace the PARCC assessments, the state Department of Education hired the American Institutes for Research to develop and administer the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA).²⁵

DIBELS in Alabama and Louisiana

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through grade 6. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.

DIBELS comprise seven measures that function as indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. DIBELS were designed as a means to identify children experiencing difficulty in the acquisition of basic early literacy skills in order to provide support early and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties.

Source: "What are DIBELS." Dynamic Measurement Group. <https://dibels.org/dibels.html> (accessed October 13, 2015).

SLC Member States: National Testing Consortium Membership Status

State	National Testing Consortium Membership Status
Alabama	Withdrew from PARCC and Smarter Balanced in February 2013
Arkansas	Withdrew from PARCC in July 2015
Florida	Withdrew from PARCC in September 2013
Georgia	Withdrew from PARCC in July 2013
Kentucky	Withdrew from PARCC in January 2014
Louisiana	Partially withdrew from PARCC in June 2015
Mississippi	Withdrew from PARCC in January 2015
Missouri	Withdrew from Smarter Balanced in May 2015
North Carolina	Affiliate Member of Smarter Balanced
Oklahoma	Withdrew from PARCC in July 2013
South Carolina	Withdrew from Smarter Balanced in May 2014
Tennessee	Withdrew from PARCC in May 2013
Texas	Never joined PARCC or Smarter Balanced
Virginia	Never joined PARCC or Smarter Balanced
West Virginia	Governing Member of Smarter Balanced

Florida schools began to administer the FSA in the second half of the 2014-15 school year, but experienced a challenging start due to technical malfunctions, server issues,²⁶ and concerns over the appropriateness of the assessments for the state's very heterogeneous student population.²⁷ Due to these issues, the Legislature enacted legislation ordering an investigation into the validity of FSA.²⁸ Following the order, the Department of Education hired Utah-based Alpine Testing Solutions and Washington, D.C.-based edCount to perform the review.²⁹ On August 31, 2015, a final report on the validity of FSA was issued. The report noted problems with the administration of FSA, but also confirmed that the assessments, in general, do follow the industry standards for best practices.³⁰

Given the technical difficulties experienced with the first round of assessments, Alpine Testing Solutions and edCount also recommended a "hold harmless" policy for student-level decisions, i.e., using the test results for any decisions that would benefit a student, but not for any decisions with adverse effects, such as prevention of advancement to the next grade, graduation ineligibility, or placement into a remedial course.³¹ The Florida Association of District School Superintendents also raised concerns about the usage of test results for evaluating teacher and school performance given that, at the time of the report, sizable discrepancies still existed between FSA test questions and the LAFS and MAFS learning objectives established by the Board of Education.³² In reaction to Seminole County Superintendent Walt Griffin and the county School Board's proposal to use national tests in lieu of FSA, Senator Don Gaetz, chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, and Senator John Legg, chair of the Senate Pre-K–12 Education Committee, have indicated that they will file legislation to replace FSA with The ACT or SAT during the 2016 legislative session.³³

During the 2014-15 school year, the Florida student assessment system continued with a dual-testing scenario, and both NGSSS-aligned assessments and FSA were administered. Florida Standards Assessments were utilized for testing English language arts for grades 3-10 and mathematics for grades 3-8. In addition, students were tested on NGSSS-aligned science proficiency in grades 5 and 8. Florida students take FSA end-of-course assessments upon the completion of courses aligned with Florida Standards for Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry, generally in grades 9-11. End-of-course student assessments for Biology I, Civics, and U.S. History also continue to be administered at

the completion of the appropriate NGSSS-aligned courses. While NGSSS-aligned EOC assessments are phased out, students who completed an English language arts or mathematics class before the adoption of FSA, but did not pass the associated EOC assessment, are allowed to retake assessments aligned with NGSSS until summer 2017.^{34,35}

In addition to FSA and NGSSS-aligned assessments, Florida schools measure early learning abilities and subsequent student development with a variety of testing instruments. In December 2004, the Legislature passed legislation requiring "statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student ... within the first 30 school days of each school year."³⁶ Subsequently, the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener was implemented to measure how well children are prepared for kindergarten by the state's voluntary pre-kindergarten providers. The tests are aligned with the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds.³⁷

Public teachers also have the option to administer Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading in grades K-12. The assessments were developed through the collaboration of the Florida Center for Reading Research, a multidisciplinary research center at Florida State University, and Just Read, Florida!, a statewide reading initiative created through the executive order of then-Governor Jeb Bush. The tests are provided free of charge and allow teachers to guide their instruction through screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.³⁸

Until recently, in preparation for postsecondary education, the Department of Education required the administration of the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test. The assessment, administered to students in public high schools and Florida College System institutions, was used to measure a student's academic knowledge in mathematics, reading and writing, and determine appropriate college-level coursework if the student entered a postsecondary institution. Implemented in 2010, the assessment is being phased out and no longer is required for students who entered grade 9 in the 2003-04 school year, have a high school diploma, or are on active military duty.³⁹

Georgia

From 2000 to 2014, Georgia administered a series of student assessments called Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). After the state's withdrawal from PARCC in July 2013,⁴⁰ in order to align student testing with newly

adopted Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for general courses and Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for English language arts and mathematics, the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) was implemented during the 2014-15 school year.⁴¹ The new system is used to administer student assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades 3-12.⁴²

The Georgia Milestones EOC assessments for grades 3-8 are administered at the end of the school year and test students in the four aforementioned disciplines. Meanwhile, EOC assessments are administered for grades 9-12 at the completion of 10 courses designated by the state Board of Education. Middle school students who take a high school course also must complete the appropriate EOC assessment. Students are evaluated at the completion of the following courses, or their Board-approved substitutes:⁴³

- » 9th Grade Literature and Composition
- » American Literature and Composition
- » Algebra I
- » Geometry
- » Coordinate Algebra
- » Analytic Geometry
- » Biology
- » Physical Science
- » U.S. History
- » Economics/Business/Free Enterprise

The state has contracted with CTB/McGraw-Hill to transition the administration of Georgia Milestones assessments to a completely online format, with traditional paper-pencil tests available only as back-ups. Approximately 30 percent of students in grades 3-12 took the assessments online in its debut year. A small, undetermined number of students experienced connection issues mostly attributable to the testing system's delay in syncing student information across databases and other server issues. The state Department of Education was forced to suspend testing for some students for two days to allow the vendor to identify and remedy the problem.⁴⁴ As recompense for the failures, CTB/McGraw-Hill offered the state several additional services free of charge. Valued at \$4.5 million, the company will provide \$2.64 million to create and administer new mathematics EOC assessments, up to \$120,000 to hire a program manager who will serve as the primary point of contact for coordination of assessments, up to \$60,000 to contract for an independent analysis of the online testing problems experienced in the first year, and more than \$1.6 million in other services.⁴⁵

State education officials predicted that student scores for Georgia Milestones would decline markedly from those earned for the CRCT, and the predictions did indeed prove true. For example, less than 40 percent of students scored proficient or better in English language arts and mathematics.⁴⁶ However, State School Superintendent Richard Woods noted that, “[the] previous assessment, the CRCT, set some of the lowest expectations for student proficiency in the nation, and that [could not] continue. Georgia Milestones sets higher standards for our students and evens the playing field with the rest of the nation.”⁴⁷ Indeed, Honesty Gap now predicts that Georgia is well on its way to closing its previously vast variation between student scores on state assessments and the National Assessment of Educational Progress.^{B,48}

As a component of its teacher evaluation system, Georgia also requires the administration of tests measuring student progress toward Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), developed by school districts and approved by the state Department of Education. Originally implemented in 2012 in collaboration with the federal Race to the Top Initiative,^C the state requirements for SLOs were rolled back significantly in July 2015, through the order of the state school superintendent.⁴⁹ Previously, SLO end-of-grade assessments were administered for all non-tested GPS and GSE subject areas from Pre-K to grade 12, as well as all students starting

^B The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a series of federally required, nationally administered, periodically conducted student assessments in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, U.S. history, and technology and engineering literacy. Student scores on the assessments are the baseline for the federally released Nation's Report Card, which provides state-level comparative data about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. According to Honesty Gap, states' testing and reporting processes often yield significantly different results than the data collected and reported by NAEP. The organization defines “honesty gap” as the discrepancy between NAEP, the Nation's Report Card, and a state's report of their student performance.

^C Race to the Top was a component of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* that created a \$4.35 billion competitive grant program designed to encourage and reward states for developing education innovations and reforms for achieving significant improvement in student outcomes; closing achievement gaps; improving high school graduation rates; and implementing ambitious plans in four core education reform areas: 1) adopting college- and career-readiness standards, 2) building data systems that measure student growth and success, 3) increasing teachers and principal effectiveness, and 4) turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

An Overview of Student Testing Contractors

ACT: formerly known as American College Testing, ACT is an Iowa-based nonprofit organization that develops a vast number of student assessments for K-12 school systems. The organization also performs research and promotes education and workforce policy solutions at the national, state, and local levels. In 2015, more than 1.9 million graduating U.S. high school students took The ACT college-entry exam (see page 3), approximately 59 percent of all high school graduates in the United States.

American Institutes for Research: a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization and one of the world's largest for behavioral and social science research and evaluation. AIR offers a full range of student assessment services, collaborating with state, district, and international clients to develop and deploy assessment programs. The organization has delivered online adaptive tests for more than 24 states, with approximately 60 million online tests delivered during the 2014-15 school year.

CTB/McGraw-Hill: a subsidiary of McGraw-Hill Education, CTB is an Ohio-based global education organization focused on test publishing, scoring and reporting information about educational progress. CTB offers assessments for pre-K through adult education across the United States and the world. Customers include public, private, charter, and faith-based schools and districts, as well as special-needs programs. Of note, on June 30, 2015, Data Recognition Corporation announced it would acquire key assets of the CTB assessment business of McGraw-Hill Education.

Data Recognition Corporation: a Minnesota-based privately held company serving 13 states and delivering assessments for multi-state consortia.

Educational Testing Service: the world's largest nonprofit educational measurement organization. New Jersey-based ETS develops, administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually in more than 180 countries, at more than 9,000 locations worldwide.

Measured Progress: a New Hampshire-based nonprofit organization that offers K-12 assessment options from customized individual classroom quizzes to statewide standardized testing.

Measurement Incorporated: a North Carolina-based, full-service educational company that provides achievement tests and scoring services for state governments, other testing companies, and various organizations.

Questar Assessment Incorporated: a Minnesota-based, full-service testing company with wide-ranging services, from statewide assessments for grades 3-8, high school, English language proficiency, and alternate programs to standardized district assessments.

Pearson: a London-based for-profit media conglomerate with global operations in the education, business information and consumer publishing markets. Its education division, Pearson Education, provides test development, processing and scoring services to governments, educational institutions, corporations and professional bodies around the world. Pearson is the primary developer of PARCC assessments.

grade 3. Teachers were required to administer up to six SLO assessments per year whereas, going forward, Race to the Top school districts have the option to require teachers to administer only two, and regular school districts have the option to require teachers to administer only one or none if they are teaching a course already assessed with Georgia Milestones.⁵⁰

In addition to regular student assessments, the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills is a flexible

kindergarten student performance evaluation implemented during the 2008-09 school year. Throughout the year, in accordance with a schedule determined by the teacher, children are assessed on their skills in the disciplines of English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, as well as their approaches to learning, personal and social development, and motor skills. Teachers may assess students through sample assessment activities, their own assessments, personal observation, or a combination of methods. The teacher only is required to

record student performance into an online database by the end of the school year so that it can be used to create customized reports for instructional planning, report cards, and/or parents.^{51,52}

From 1991 to 2013, high school students were required to pass the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT) to earn a diploma. In March 2015, Governor Nathan Deal signed House Bill 91, eliminating the requirement.⁵³ The new law also allows students who failed the GHSWT in prior years to petition local school systems for a retroactive high school diploma, if they have fulfilled all other graduation requirements. The GHSWT no longer is administered.⁵⁴

Kentucky

Starting with the 2011-12 school year, the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) replaced the Kentucky Core Content Test. The commonwealth withdrew from PARCC in January 2014,⁵⁵ and contracted with Pearson⁵⁶ for the provision of assessments for grades 3-8 and high school writing.^{57,58} The Kentucky Academic Standards serve as the learning objectives measured by the assessments. During the most recent 2014-15 school year, the commonwealth administered K-PREP student assessments for the following proficiencies:⁵⁹

- » English Language Arts: grades 3-8
- » Mathematics: grades 3-8
- » Science: grades 4 and 7
- » Social Studies: grades 5 and 8
- » Language Mechanics: grades 4 and 6
- » On-Demand Writing: grades 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11

In addition to these regular assessments, the commonwealth administers several ACT-developed student assessments to determine students' college- and career-readiness and measure individual school performance.^D Since the 2011-12 school year, ACT QualityCore EOC assessments also have been required for English II, Algebra II, Biology and U.S. History, generally completed in high school. Meanwhile, ACT Explore is administered to students in grade 8,⁶⁰ and ACT Plan is administered to students in grade 10. In grade 11, students take a customized, four-component ACT assessment, providing a third and final indicator of college- and career-readiness. The four components comprise:

^D Please see page 3 for a text box addressing ACT-aligned student assessments.

SLC Member States: Student Testing Contractors

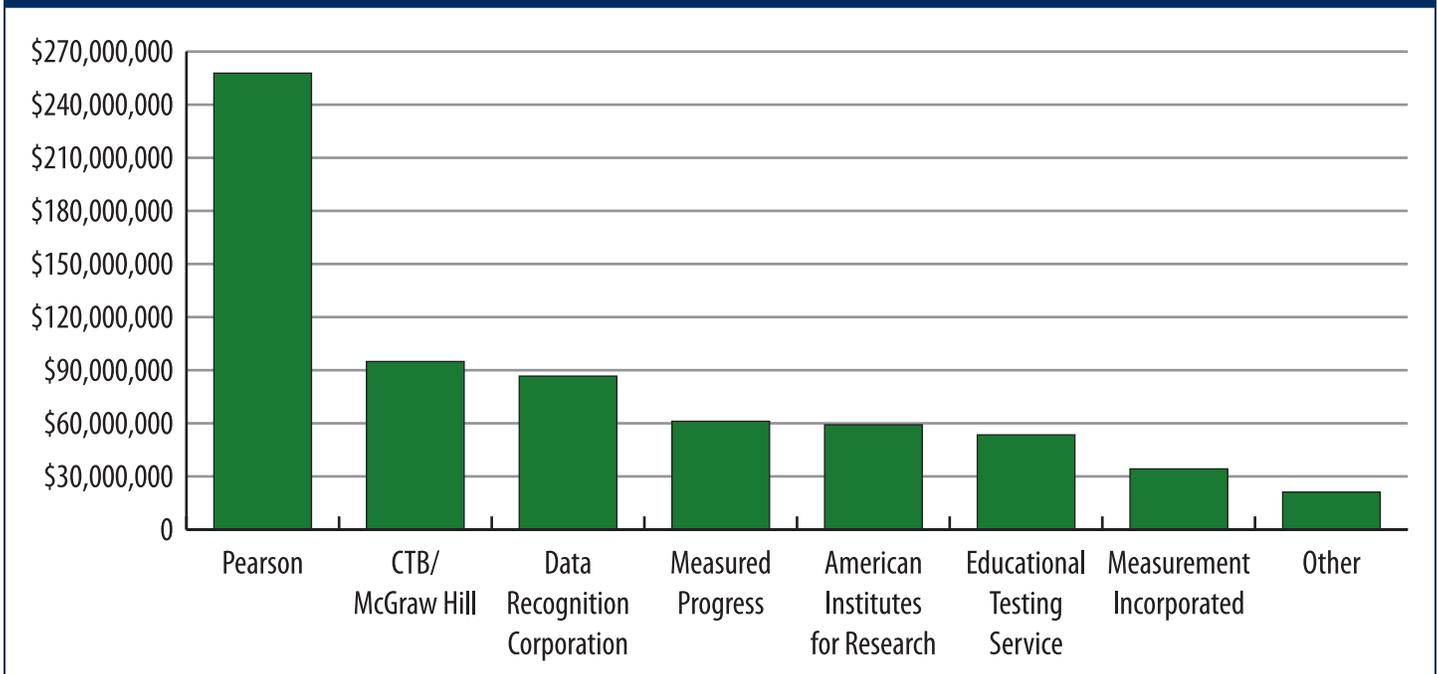
State	Primary Student Testing Contractor
Alabama	ACT
Arkansas	ACT
Florida	American Institutes for Research
Georgia	CTB/McGraw-Hill
Kentucky	Pearson
Louisiana	Data Recognition Corporation (contract expired June 30, 2015)
Mississippi	Questar Assessment Incorporated
Missouri	Pending as of October 5, 2015; previously, CTB/McGraw-Hill
North Carolina	Technical Outreach for Public Schools, North Carolina State University*
Oklahoma	Measured Progress
South Carolina	ACT
Tennessee	Measurement Incorporated / American Institutes for Research
Texas	Educational Testing Service
Virginia	Pearson
West Virginia	American Institutes for Research

*North Carolina is one of two states in the nation that contracts with an in-state university to develop and administer student assessments, per a November 2012 report on state spending on K-12 assessments by Matthew M. Chingos at the Brookings Institution. The state appears to be continuing the practice, with sizable cost savings.

- » **Tests of Educational Development:** this component is the customary ACT assessment in English language arts, reading, mathematics, and science. Student ability in reasoning, analysis, problem solving, and integration of diverging information is assessed.
- » **Course/Grade Information Section:** this component serves as the student's high school transcript.
- » **Student Profile Section:** this component includes information provided by students regarding their educational plans, interests, needs, financial aid, and demographics.
- » **The ACT Interest Inventory:** this component comprises a 72-item survey used to identify occupations and majors that may align with a student's academic and personal interests.⁶¹

ACT Compass assessments are administered in grade 12 to students who do not meet the scoring benchmarks set by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) for the Tests of Educational Development component of

Market Share of 2012 State K-12 Student Testing Contracts (\$USD)



Source: Chingos, Matthew M. *Strength in Numbers: State Spending on K-12 Assessment Systems*. Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings. November 2012. http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2012/11/29%20cost%20of%20assessment%20chingos/11_assessment_chingos_final.pdf (accessed October 27, 2015).

commonwealth's ACT assessment. Meeting the benchmark requirements for ACT Compass allows students to enter credit-bearing college courses and avoid remedial education.⁶² In addition, for students planning to enter a college or university in Kentucky, but not meeting CPE benchmarks, the Kentucky Online Testing placement testing system, offered free of charge through a partnership between the University of Kentucky and North Kentucky University, gives students one more opportunity to demonstrate college-readiness and avoid remedial coursework.⁶³

Kentucky also administers assessments for students in career and technical education programs. ACT WorkKeys is one of two tests that students must take to demonstrate their academic readiness for the workforce. Students who pass the series of three tests (in applied math, locating information, and reading for information) included in the ACT WorkKeys are awarded an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate.⁶⁴ Alternatively, students can take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery to fulfill the academic skills accreditation requirement. The Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards Assessment is given to students studying one of 26 career pathways, and utilized to demonstrate technical career-readiness. Students are awarded Kentucky

Occupational Skill Standards Certificates upon passing an industry-specific assessment.⁶⁵ A student also may demonstrate his or her technical career-readiness through the acquisition of private industry certification.⁶⁶

For school entry, the BRIGANCE Early Childhood Kindergarten Screen III is employed to measure a child's stage of development in five areas upon entry into kindergarten. The assessment allows teachers and schools to plan their instruction based on the early identification of students' strengths and weaknesses.⁶⁷ Kentucky also requires the assessment of reading and mathematics skills of students in grade 1. Teachers and schools are allowed to select their own testing mechanisms as long as they are 1) developmentally appropriate, reliable, and valid; 2) utilize best practices in early childhood assessment; and 3) align with the Kentucky Academic Standards and Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.⁶⁸

Louisiana

Student assessments developed by PARCC were administered during the 2014-15 school year. However, legislation signed by Governor Bobby Jindal on June 29, 2015, stipulates that PARCC-developed material may comprise no more

Pre-K–12 Early Learning, Subject Area, and Other Student Assessments in SLC Member States*

State	K-12 English Language Arts and Math Standards	Early Learning Assessments	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
Alabama [†]	College- and Career-Ready Standards	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills or district choice (grades K-2)	Reading Math	Reading Math	Reading Math Science	Reading Math	Reading Math Science
Arkansas	Common Core State Standards	Qualls Early Learning Inventory (grades K-1) Iowa Assessments (grades 1-2)	English Reading Writing Math Science				
Florida	Language Arts Florida Standards Mathematics Florida Standards	Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (grade K)	English Math	English Math	English Math Science	English Math	English Math
Georgia	Georgia Standards of Excellence	Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (grade K) Student Learning Objectives [§] (grades Pre-K – 12)	English Math Science Social Studies Student Learning Objectives [§]				
Kentucky	Kentucky Academic Standards	BRIGANCE Early Childhood Kindergarten Screen III (grade K) Teacher-selected reading and math assessments (grade 1)	English Math	English Math Science Language Mechanics	English Math On-Demand Writing Social Studies	English Math On-Demand Writing Language Mechanics	English Math Science
Louisiana	English Language Arts/Literacy Standards Standards for Mathematical Practice	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (grades K-3)	English Math Science Social Studies				
Mississippi	Mississippi College- and Career-Ready Standards	Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (grade K) STAR Early Literacy (grades K-3)	English Math Reading	English Math	English Math Science	English Math	English Math

* Due to many state-specific particularities, information is provided as fully, yet concisely, as practicable. For complete details, please see specific state sections.

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	End-of-Course Assessments (generally administered in grades 9-12)
Reading Math		English Reading Writing Math Science	The ACT Plus Writing	ACT WorkKeys	English 9/10 (not state-mandated) Algebra I (not state-mandated)
English Reading Writing Math Science	English Reading Writing Math Science	English Reading Writing Math Science	The ACT (not state- mandated)		
English Math Science	English	English			Algebra I Algebra II Geometry Biology I Civics U.S. History
English Math Science Social Studies Student Learning Objectives [§]	Student Learning Objectives [§]	Student Learning Objectives [§]	Student Learning Objectives [§]	Student Learning Objectives [§]	9 th Grade Literature and Composition American Literature and Composition Algebra I Geometry Coordinate Algebra Analytic Geometry Biology Physical Science U.S. History Economics/Business/Free Enterprise
English Math On-Demand Writing Social Studies ACT Explore		On-Demand Writing ACT Plan	On-Demand Writing The ACT (customized)	ACT Compass (limited use) ACT WorkKeys (CTE students only)	English II Algebra II Biology U.S. History
English Math Science Social Studies ACT Explore	ACT Explore	ACT Plan	The ACT ACT WorkKeys (not state- mandated)		English II English III Algebra Geometry Biology U.S. History
English Math Science			The ACT	Mississippi Career Planning and Assessment System (CTE students only)	English II Algebra I Biology I U.S. History

[†] Based on information available as of October 5, 2015.

[§] The state testing requirements for Student Learning Objectives vary by school.

Pre-K–12 Early Learning, Subject Area, and Other Student Assessments in SLC Member States*

State	K-12 English Language Arts and Math Standards	Early Learning Assessments	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
Missouri	Missouri Learning Standards	Desired Results Developmental Profile (Pre-K, not state-mandated)	English Math	English Math	English Math Science	English Math	English Math
North Carolina	North Carolina Standard Course of Study	English: K-2 Literacy Assessment (grades K-2) Math: Formative Instructional and Assessment Tasks (grades K-2) (School districts may administer state-designed English language arts and math assessments or develop their own)	English Math Reading	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies
Oklahoma	Priority Academic Student Skills	School districts must administer one of 13 state-approved reading and English comprehension assessments (grades K-3)	English Math	English Math	English Math Writing Science U.S. History	English Math	English Math Geography
South Carolina	South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards	School districts must administer one of three state-approved formative assessments (Pre-K) Developmental Reading Assessment 2nd Edition PLUS (grade K)	English Math	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies	English Math Science Social Studies

* Due to many state-specific particularities, information is provided as fully, yet concisely, as practicable. For complete details, please see specific state sections.

than half of the questions on future student assessments.⁶⁹ During the 2015-16 school year, the state will continue testing students in grades 3-8 in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.⁷⁰ Social studies assessments will be in the field-test stage during this year to allow alignment to updated educational standards by the 2016-17 school year.⁷¹ The educational standards that guide student testing include: English Language Arts/Literacy Standards; Standards for Mathematical Practice; and (science and social studies) Grade-Level Expectations.

Louisiana students take EOC assessments in English II, English III, Algebra, Geometry, Biology and U.S. History, generally

completed in high school. Additionally, a series of assessments developed by ACT is required for students in middle and high school.⁶ Students in grades 8 and 9 take ACT Explore; ACT Plan is administered in grade 10; and The ACT is required for students in grade 11.⁷² Starting with spring 2015, the state also began to offer, but not require, ACT WorkKeys assessments for students pursuing a career-oriented high school diploma. Students who earn a sufficient score on ACT WorkKeys can qualify for the state's postsecondary scholarship program, Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, to pursue further career and technical credentials.⁷³

⁶ Please see page 3 for a text box addressing ACT-aligned student assessments.

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	End-of-Course Assessments (generally administered in grades 9-12)	
English Math Science			The ACT		English II Algebra I Algebra II (accelerated students)	Biology Government Personal Finance
English Math Science Social Studies ACT Explore		ACT Plan	The ACT	ACT WorkKeys	English I English II English III English IV Math I Math II Math III Advanced Functions and Modeling Discrete Mathematics Precalculus	Physical Science Environmental Science Biology Chemistry Physics American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics World History American History I American History II
English Math Writing Science U.S. History					English II English III Algebra I Algebra II	Geometry Biology I U.S. History
English Math Science Social Studies			The ACT ACT WorkKeys		English 1 Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2 Biology 1/Applied Biology 2 U.S. History and the Constitution	

Like Alabama, in early learning classrooms, Louisiana utilizes DIBELS. The assessment is required for children in grades K-3 and administered three times per year. Sponsored by the state, DIBELS is used by local education agencies to measure students' progression in reading skills and identify those who may need intervention. School districts may apply for a waiver of the testing requirement if they have identified another assessment tool better suited for their school settings.⁷⁴

Mississippi

In January 2015, the Mississippi Department of Education announced the state was withdrawing from PARCC

and would begin to seek bids for new student assessments aligned to its Mississippi College- and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS). During the transition, PARCC assessments remained the testing mechanism for English language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8 for the 2014-15 school year.⁷⁵ In April 2015, the Board of Education approved a 10-year, \$110.9 million testing contract with Questar Assessment, Incorporated, for the development of MCCRS-aligned English language arts and mathematics assessments for grades 3-8; EOC assessments for Algebra I and English II, and an optional Geometry and/or Algebra II assessment. The new assessments are scheduled to be implemented during the 2015-16 school year.⁷⁶

Pre-K–12 Early Learning, Subject Area, and Other Student Assessments in SLC Member States*

State	K-12 English Language Arts and Math Standards	Early Learning Assessments	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
Tennessee	Tennessee’s State Standards	Reading Math (grades K-2, not state-mandated)	English Writing Math Science Social Studies	English Writing Math Science Social Studies	English Writing Math Science Social Studies	English Writing Math Science Social Studies	English Writing Math Science Social Studies
Texas	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills	Texas Primary Reading Inventory or other state-approved reading diagnostic instrument (grades K-2)	English Math	English Math Writing	English Math Science	English Math	English Math Writing
Virginia	Standards of Learning	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (grades K-3, not state-mandated)	English Math Science [†] History [†]	English Math	English Math Science Writing [†]	English Math	English Math
West Virginia	Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives	Early Learning Scale (Pre-K) Teacher-selected formative assessments (grade K)	English Math	English Math Science	English Math	English Math Science	English Math

* Due to many state-specific particularities, information is provided as fully, yet concisely, as practicable. For complete details, please see specific state sections.

The state also administers a 3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment, which requires a minimum level of competency in reading for student advancement to grade 4.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, assessments aligned with the 2010 Mississippi Science Framework are administered to students in grades 5 and 8.⁷⁸ Since 1999, for grades 9-12, the state has required the administration of EOC assessments upon completion of Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II.⁷⁹ All students in grade 11 also were administered The ACT beginning with the 2014-15 school year.⁸⁰ Finally, secondary students in career and technical education programs must complete an occupation-specific portion of the Mississippi Career Planning and Assessment System to demonstrate proficiency in technical skills.⁸¹

For school entry assessments, Mississippi utilizes the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to measure how well

children are prepared for kindergarten by Pre-K programs in relation to the Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children.⁸² In grades K-3, the STAR Early Literacy assessment, developed by Renaissance Learning,^F has been selected by the Department of Education for early literacy and numeracy screening, and the identification of students who require supplemental instruction and intensive intervention.⁸³

Missouri

Missouri is one of three SLC member states that—along with North Carolina and West Virginia—originally participated in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. However, on May 8, 2015, Governor Jay Nixon signed into

^F Renaissance Learning, Incorporated is a Wisconsin-based educational assessment and learning analytics company focused on cloud-based educational software for use in grades K-12.

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	End-of-Course Assessments (generally administered in grades 9-12)	
English Writing Math Science Social Studies ACT Explore		ACT Plan	The ACT or SAT		English I English II English III Algebra I Algebra II Geometry	Biology I Chemistry U.S. History
English Math Science Social Studies					English I English II English III (not state- mandated)	Algebra I Algebra II (not state- mandated) Biology U.S. History
English Math Science Writing					Reading Writing Algebra I Algebra II Geometry Earth Science Biology Chemistry Virginia Studies	Civics & Economics World History & Geography to 1500 World History & Geography 1500-Present World Geography Virginia & U.S. History U.S. History to 1865 [†] U.S. History: 1865 to the Present [†]
English Math	English Math	English Math Science	English Math ACT Compass			

[†]District-developed alternative assessment.

law an appropriations bill that eliminated \$4.2 million of state funding previously reserved to pay for Smarter Balanced assessments.⁸⁴ The legislation also directed the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to develop a plan for new student assessments by February 1, 2016, and appropriated \$7 million toward that purpose.⁸⁵ In June 2015, DESE indicated it would not be able to develop new assessments by the 2015-16 school year, and that the state will have to purchase English language arts and mathematics tests from an outside vendor.⁸⁶

During the 2014-15 school year, to measure their proficiency in the Missouri Learning Standards, students in grades 3-8 were administered assessments in English language arts and mathematics, and students in grades 5 and 8 also were tested in science.⁸⁷ End-of-course assessments were administered at the completion of Algebra I, Algebra II for

accelerated students, English II, Biology, and Government. Students in grade 11 were administered The ACT, and DESE has indicated this practice will continue into 2016.⁸⁸ Additionally, as a graduation requirement, Missouri administers a Personal Finance assessment, although students taking a complete stand-alone personal finance course are exempt from the requirement.⁸⁹ Missouri is the only SLC member state requiring the administration of a personal finance assessment, indicating a strong commitment by the state toward ensuring that students understand the basics of disposable income; money management; spending and credit; and saving and investing.

After the completion of a year-long pilot program testing three different school entry readiness assessments, the state Board of Education recommended that school districts adopt the Desired Results Developmental Profile to assess

the development of children in pre-kindergarten. The testing instrument is aligned with the Missouri Early Learning Goals and its usage is optional.⁹⁰

North Carolina

As of September 24, 2015, North Carolina remains an affiliate member of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.⁹¹ During the 2014-15 school year, student assessments in English language arts and mathematics, aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) adopted in June 2010, were administered to students in grades 3-8.^{92,93} The state also continued the administration of a Beginning-of-Grade 3 English Language Arts/Reading Test, which serves as a baseline measure for the English language arts and reading abilities of students starting grade 3.⁹⁴ Students who do not meet the proficiency cut-score for the end-of-year English language arts assessment for grade 3 have the option to retake the test, take the state's Read to Achieve Test,⁹⁵ or complete a Grade 3 Student Reading Portfolio to demonstrate the appropriate level of reading comprehension required for promotion to grade 4. The Read to Achieve Test also is utilized for mid-year promotion of students who were retained due to an insufficient reading proficiency.⁹⁵ Student assessments for science, aligned with Essential Standards adopted in February 2009, were administered to students in grades 5 and 8.⁹⁶ End-of-course tests were administered for Math I, Biology, and English II, generally completed in high school.⁹⁷ The EOC assessments were aligned with the same standards as those for grades 3-8.

In 2010, nearly \$400 million in federal Race to the Top competitive grants assisted North Carolina in the remodeling of its public education system.⁹⁸ With those changes, a new Educator Effectiveness Model required the addition of several student assessments to those for English language arts, mathematics, and science.⁹⁹ These assessments, the North Carolina Final Exams, are EOC tests required in addition to the aforementioned student assessments and are scheduled for the following courses during the 2015-16 school year:¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ The North Carolina Read to Achieve Test is a reference to the state's Read to Achieve legislative initiative, a part of the *Excellent Public Schools Act*, to ensure that every student reads at grade level by the end of grade 3.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| » English I | » 4 th Grade Science |
| » English III | » 6 th Grade Science |
| » English IV | » 7 th Grade Science |
| » 4 th Grade Social Studies | » Physical Science |
| » 5 th Grade Social Studies | » Earth/
Environmental Science |
| » 6 th Grade Social Studies | » Chemistry |
| » 7 th Grade Social Studies | » Physics |
| » 8 th Grade Social Studies | » Math II |
| » American History:
The Founding Principles,
Civics, and Economics | » Math III |
| » World History | » Advanced Functions
and Modeling |
| » American History I | » Discrete Mathematics |
| » American History II | » Precalculus |

During the 2015-16 school year, North Carolina also will continue to administer a series of ACT-aligned assessments:¹⁰¹ students in grade 8 will be administered ACT Explore; students in grade 10, ACT Plan; students in grade 11, The ACT; and students in grade 12, ACT WorkKeys.¹⁰¹ The ACT WorkKeys assessments allow students to earn both a State Career Readiness Certificate, as well as an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate.¹⁰²

North Carolina also gives school districts the option to implement Credit by Demonstrated Mastery Assessments (CDM), providing students an opportunity to bypass full-semester high school courses. These assessments give students one chance to gain credit for any number of high school courses by demonstrating mastery in the subject area through successful completion of a test and the presentation of a real-world “artifact” – potentially acceptable items range from three-dimensional objects to research papers to oral presentations to science projects and more – created through the application of skills and knowledge expected for the course. If a student fails to show mastery in the subject area, the full-semester course must be completed to earn the necessary credit. Courses excluded from CDM are:¹⁰³

- » Career and Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning
- » CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement
- » CTE Advanced Studies
- » Courses designed for English language learners
- » Healthful Living
- » Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate

¹⁰¹ Please see page 3 for a text box addressing ACT-aligned student assessments.

North Carolina currently is implementing a new K-3 Formative Assessment Process¹ to meet the requirements of legislation passed by the General Assembly, as well as a federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant.¹⁰⁴ A Kindergarten Entry Assessment – creating a snapshot of a child’s approaches to learning; cognitive abilities; emotional-social skills; language and communication; and health and physical abilities – was piloted during the 2014-15 school year and is scheduled for full implementation during the 2015-16 school year.^{105,106} Assessment instruments for grades K-3 still are in the preliminary stages of development.

While the K-3 Formative Assessment Process rolls out, North Carolina continues to require formative and summative assessments for children in grades K-2. In accordance with legislative and state Board of Education requirements for K-2 mathematics, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) provides state-developed Formative Instructional and Assessment Tasks and guidance on summative assessments to school districts to test mathematical understanding aligned with NCSCS. Individual school districts may choose to use the state-developed Tasks, adapt them, or utilize alternative assessment instruments.¹⁰⁷ For K-2 assessments in English language arts, NCDPI created the K-2 Literacy Assessment to serve as a tool for fulfilling state formative and summative assessment requirements.¹⁰⁸

Oklahoma

Oklahoma withdrew from PARCC in July 2013, and subsequently began a search for a new statewide student assessment provider.¹⁰⁹ The state originally contracted with CTB/McGraw-Hill, but after a series of technological issues with online testing and problematic contract negotiations, on October 17, 2014, the state hired Measured Progress as its testing service provider.¹¹⁰ Presently, the state administers Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests to students in grades 3-8 and at the completion of seven high school courses.¹¹¹ In grades 3-8, English language arts and mathematics are tested in alignment with the state’s educational standards,

¹The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction formative assessments used by teachers and students during instruction provide feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to help students improve their achievement of intended instructional outcomes. These assessments occur minute-to-minute or in short cycles and include tasks such as: questioning, discussions, learning activities, feedback, and student reflections. In contrast, summative assessments are those administered at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year.

Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS), last revised in 2010 and 2009,^J respectively. Student assessments for science, aligned with PASS revised in 2011, are administered in grades 5 and 8.¹¹² Students in grades 5 and 8 also must complete a writing assessment that measures their ability to compose a narrative text, informative text, or an opinion.¹¹³ Student assessments – aligned with the Oklahoma Academic Standards adopted in 2014 – for U.S. history are administered in grades 5 and 8, and for geography in grade 7.¹¹⁴

In addition to end-of-grade assessments, Oklahoma also administers EOC assessments at the completion of the following high school courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English II, English III, Biology I, and U.S. History.¹¹⁵ In order to earn a high school diploma, students must pass the tests for English II and Algebra I, plus any two of the other subjects, or demonstrate mastery of state academic content standards through an alternative testing mechanism approved by the state Board of Education.¹¹⁶

Oklahoma’s *Reading Sufficiency Act* requires assessments at the beginning and end of the school year for grades K-3 that measure students’ ability to distinguish phonemes (i.e., the distinct sounds associated with letters), reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The state Board of Education is charged with reviewing and selecting appropriate screening instruments, and has approved 13 formative assessments for grades K-3 that school districts may use to measure reading and English comprehension. Students in grade 3 must demonstrate reading proficiency to move on to grade 4.^{117,118}

South Carolina

On May 30, 2014, Governor Nicki Haley signed legislation officially ending South Carolina’s participation in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, prohibiting the use of Smarter Balanced assessments in the state, and requiring new English language arts and mathematics standards for the 2015-16 school year, to replace the Common Core State Standards.¹¹⁹ In accordance, on March 11, 2015, the state Board of Education unanimously approved new South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for English Language Arts and South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for Math.¹²⁰ Following the ban on Smarter Balanced assessments, the South Carolina Budget and Control Board

^JOklahoma officially dropped its Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on June 5, 2014, and subsequently reverted to its pre-CCSS educational standards.

contracted with ACT for the administration of assessments in English language arts and mathematics. However, on March 25, 2015, the state Procurement Review Panel confirmed that the original five-year contract with ACT is valid for only one year and a new bidding process for state testing proposals will be required after its expiration.¹²¹ A request for proposal was issued by the Budget and Control Board in August 2015 for the administration, scoring, and reporting of English language arts and mathematics student assessments for grades 3-11.¹²²

Testing for English language arts and mathematics for grades 3-8 with ACT Aspire was implemented during the latter half of the 2014-15 school year.¹²³ Meanwhile, the South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards was administered for grades 4-8 to measure student proficiency vis-à-vis the South Carolina Academic Standards for science and social studies.¹²⁴ End-of-course assessments were required for the following courses, typically completed in high school:¹²⁵

- » Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2
- » English 1
- » U.S. History and the Constitution
- » Biology 1/Applied Biology 2

ACT WorkKeys and The ACT were administered to students in grade 11.^{126,K} Until 2014, South Carolina administered a High School Assessment Program that required students to pass a high school exit exam to earn a diploma. Much like the state of Georgia, in April 2014, Governor Nikki Haley signed legislation that eliminated the program and its requirements. Further, former high school students who failed to pass the exam, but fulfilled all other graduation requirements, now may petition their local school boards for a high school diploma.¹²⁷

Following the passage of the *General Appropriations Act of 2014*, South Carolina requires publicly-funded pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students to be tested at the beginning of the school year on early language learning and literacy.¹²⁸ In June 2015, the state Board of Education approved three formative assessments – Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening; Individual Growth and Development Indicators; and Teaching Strategies GOLD – for pre-kindergarten and one for kindergarten, the Developmental Reading Assessment 2nd Edition PLUS.¹²⁹

^K Please see page 3 for a text box addressing ACT-aligned student assessments.

Tennessee

On May 13, 2014, Governor Bill Haslam signed into law legislation mandating the administration of the state-developed Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) to assess English language arts and mathematics proficiency in grades 3-8 during the 2014-15 school year. The legislation also required a competitive bidding process for the state contract to administer the student assessments during the 2015-16 school year. Shortly thereafter, the governor, commissioner of education, and chair of the state Board of Education composed a joint letter informing PARCC about Tennessee's complete withdrawal from the consortium.¹³⁰ In November 2014, the state finalized a five-year, \$108 million testing contract with Measurement Incorporated. According to the nonprofit news organization, *Chalkbeat Tennessee*, Measurement Incorporated will be subcontracting with the American Institutes for Research, the testing provider for Florida and Utah.¹³¹

The new assessments for English language arts and mathematics, called TNReady, are being deployed with the 2015-16 school year for grades 3-11. The assessments are aligned with Tennessee's State Standards, adopted in 2010 and implemented during the 2013-14 school year.¹³² Depending on their school schedule, students in grades 3-8 will take the assessments for English language arts and mathematics in two or four parts during the school year.¹³³ The English language arts assessments include a writing section that requires students to compose two essays, with each graded on four rubrics: development, focus/organization, language, and conventions.¹³⁴

Science and social studies also will continue to be tested in grades 3-8 as part of TCAP. In addition, Tennessee continues to administer EOC assessments, generally during high school, upon the completion of English I, English II, English III, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry,^L U.S. History, Biology I, and Chemistry.¹³⁵ Tennessee also continues to require a series of ACT-aligned student assessments. Students in grade 8 take ACT Explore; ACT Plan is administered in grade 10; and The ACT or SAT is required for students in grade 11.

For grades K-2, to measure students' potential future success in later grades, the state Department of Education

^L Alternative mathematics assessments (Integrated Math I, II, and III) are available for schools that teach integrated mathematics.

provides school districts an optional norm-referenced^M basic reading and mathematics assessment, related to components of the Stanford Achievement Test 10.¹³⁶ Additionally, Tennessee is moving toward the full implementation of a Response to Instruction and Intervention framework that requires school districts to administer universal screeners and progress-monitoring assessments in grades 1-12. The framework utilizes specifically directed teacher observations (or “screeners”) of student responses to instruction to identify those who require quick instructional intervention. Progress-monitoring assessments will determine the effectiveness of those interventions.¹³⁷

Effective student assessment continues to receive much attention from several fronts in Tennessee. On March 2, 2015, Commissioner of Education Candice McQueen formed the Tennessee Task Force on Student Testing and Assessment and gave the 18-member Task Force six-months to “(1) identify and study best practices in student assessment, (2) ensure local school districts and the state are appropriately using assessments to improve student achievement, and (3) better inform stakeholders about the state assessment program.”¹³⁸ In September 2015, the Task Force issued its final report, including 16 recommendations for improving student testing in Tennessee. Most notably, the Task Force recommended “elimination of the kindergarten and first-grade annual standardized tests; elimination of the mandatory [ACT Explore assessment for grade 8] and [ACT Plan assessment for grade 10] tests; continued requirement of the ACT or SAT for [students in grade 10], but not the adoption of [ACT Aspire] or SAT’s companion test.”¹³⁹ State officials likely will respond to the recommendations of the Task Force in the coming months.

Texas

Texas never joined PARCC or Smarter Balanced and has continued to administer student assessments through the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program implemented during the 2011-12 school year. English language arts and mathematics proficiencies are assessed in grades 3-8; writing in grades 4 and 7; science in grades 5 and 8; and social studies in grade 8. The state also administers EOC assessments at the completion of

^MNorm-referenced refers to standardized tests that are designed to compare and rank test takers in relation to one another. Norm-referenced tests report whether test takers performed better or worse than a hypothetical average student. (*The Glossary of Education Reform*)

English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S History, generally taken in high school; EOC English III and Algebra II assessments will be offered to school districts as an option at the end of the 2015-16 school year. All state assessments are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills educational standards.¹⁴⁰

For 15 years, Pearson was the principal provider of testing services for the state. However, on May 18, 2015, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) announced that it had given preliminary approval for a four-year, \$280 million contract to Educational Testing Service for the administration of the STAAR program.^{141,142} Pearson also was contracted for \$60 million to administer the state’s alternative testing for students with cognitive disabilities, English language learners, and residual assessments for the nearly defunct Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills program.¹⁴³

For school entry assessments and beyond, school districts may choose one of 15 TEA-approved early reading assessments to administer to kindergarten students at the beginning of the year. Assessment data provided to TEA’s Early Childhood Data System informs stakeholders on the effectiveness of pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and other early childhood programs within the state. Districts also have the option to choose an alternative to the 15 TEA-approved reading assessments.¹⁴⁴

Additionally, school districts are required to administer reading assessments in grades K-2. The state commissioner of education is charged with selecting reading diagnostic instruments that are “based on valid and reliable scientific research and that measure reading skills identified by state and national experts as essential for reading development.”¹⁴⁵ School districts must administer one or more of the instruments identified on the *Commissioner’s List of Reading Instruments for Texas Public Schools and Charter Schools*, but must ensure that phonemic awareness, word recognition, and text comprehension are assessed.¹⁴⁶ The Texas Primary Reading Inventory is the most widely used assessment.¹⁴⁷

Virginia

Virginia never joined PARCC or Smarter Balanced. Instead, the Standards of Learning (SOL) for Virginia Public Schools, established by the state Board of Education, guide student assessments for the majority of subject areas taught in K-12 public schools.¹⁴⁸ In alignment with SOL, students in grades

3-8 are assessed for their proficiencies in English language arts and mathematics. Additionally, students in grades 5 are tested on their proficiency in science, and students in grade 8 are tested on science and writing skills. During the 2014-15 school year, Virginia continued using SOL-aligned tests developed and administered through Pearson, with a limited number of students experiencing disruptions while taking the online assessments.¹⁴⁹

In high school, EOC assessments are required in the following subject areas:¹⁵⁰

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| » Reading ^N | » Virginia Studies |
| » Writing ^O | » Civics & Economics |
| » Algebra I | » World History & Geography to 1500 |
| » Algebra II | » World History & Geography 1500-Present |
| » Geometry | » World Geography |
| » Earth Science | » Virginia & U.S. History |
| » Biology | |
| » Chemistry | |

In 2014, the General Assembly enacted, and the governor signed, legislation eliminating five SOL assessments administered in elementary and middle school – Grade-3 History/Social Science; Grade-3 Science; Grade-5 Writing; U.S. History to 1865; and U.S. History: 1865 to the Present. In lieu of these assessments, local school divisions must administer alternative assessments for each eliminated SOL assessment. School divisions are not required to report student scores on alternative assessments; however, they must certify their tests measure student proficiency in the associated SOL and follow guidelines established by the commonwealth’s Board of Education.¹⁵¹

Since 2000, the University of Virginia has been contracted for the provision of optional Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening assessments to school divisions wishing to identify students in grades K-3 who may require reading intervention.¹⁵² Although use of the screening instrument is voluntary, 99 percent of school divisions utilize the service, which is funded by Virginia’s Early Intervention Reading Initiative.¹⁵³

^N End-of-course SOL assessments for reading and writing generally are administered at the completion of English in grade 11. However, a school division may select an English curriculum that incorporates the necessary SOL components at a faster pace and, therefore, also administer the assessment after English in grade 10.

West Virginia

As a current governing member of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, West Virginia remains the only SLC member state maintaining full membership in either PARCC or Smarter Balanced.¹⁵⁴ During the 2014-15 school year, the state implemented a new testing platform, the West Virginia General Summative Assessment, which includes the Smarter Balanced assessments for English language arts and mathematics. The state contracted with the American Institutes for Research for the provision of the General Summative Assessment computer platform, test scoring, and the reporting system for students, parents, teachers and schools.¹⁵⁵

The Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives, a variation of Common Core State Standards customized by the Board of Education, guides student assessments. Summative assessments for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades 3-11 originally were scheduled for all students; however, in February 2015, the state Department of Education received a waiver from the state Board of Education that authorized a reduction in the number of tests.¹⁵⁶ The state also previously required the administration of ACT Explore and ACT Plan^O (during the 2013-14 school year), but eliminated these assessments from the West Virginia General Summative Assessment program. Ultimately, students in grades 3-11 were administered a two-section test for English language arts and mathematics; the first section comprised a computer adaptive test,^P followed by a second section with writing tasks and multi-step problems for measuring critical thinking, problem solving, and real world skills. Students in grades 4, 6, and 10 were given fixed-form science tests.¹⁵⁷

On April 10, 2013, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin signed into law Senate Bill 359, which created a college- and career-readiness initiative requiring the adoption of “uniform and specific college- and career-readiness standards for English language arts and math” and a “comprehensive statewide student assessment program in grade [11] ... to determine whether a student [meets the standards].” The legislation

^O Please see page 3 for a text box addressing ACT-aligned student assessments.

^P Computer adaptive tests are those that adapt to student proficiency by increasing or decreasing the difficulty of future questions based on a student’s ability to answer current questions correctly.

also required the “state Board [to] develop a twelfth-grade transitional course for both English language arts and mathematics for those students who are not on track to be college- and career-ready based on the assessment.” In response, the state Board of Education adopted the required standards and approved ACT Compass as the grade 11 assessment mechanism for English language arts and mathematics. Scores on the test determine if students are enrolled in transitional courses in grade 12. Students in these transitional courses must retake ACT Compass unless they attain scores on The ACT or SAT that meet placement standard(s).^{158,159,160}

In accordance with state Board of Education policies, the West Virginia Pre-K Child Assessment System Reporting Platform is utilized by teachers to report the progress of Pre-K students vis-à-vis an Early Learning Scale developed by the National Institute for Early Education Research.^{Q,161} Teachers must administer formative assessments for 10 skills within three domains – math/science, social-emotional/social studies, and language and literacy – and report the results at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, which allows county collaborative early childhood teams to measure the growth of Pre-K cohorts.¹⁶² In kindergarten, teachers must use developmentally appropriate practices for formative assessments and enter individual student results into the West Virginia Early Learning Reporting System semiannually.¹⁶³

Conclusion

Southern states have adopted widely varying strategies for testing the performance of their students and continue to adjust their systems for optimal efficiency. After the rigorous student testing requirements for grades 3-8 mandated by NCLB, a discernible trend toward the elimination of additional testing, or at least the introduction of flexibility for testing requirements, is emerging. Meanwhile, with the new national focus on college- and career-readiness, a few Southern states recently have implemented student assessments, such as those developed by ACT, to measure these capacities more accurately and further prepare students for postsecondary education or the workforce.

^Q A unit of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the National Institute for Early Education Research conducts and communicates research to support high-quality, effective, early childhood education for all young children. The Institute offers independent research-based advice and technical assistance to policymakers, journalists, researchers, and educators.

As of late October 2015, with the rewrite of the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* still underway, and regulations for state accountability systems still undetermined, it remains to be seen if vast changes to state student assessment systems will occur in the near future. However, clear pressure on Congress to limit student testing to some degree continues, as evidenced by a recent announcement by the administration that student testing should take no more than 2 percent of a student’s classroom time.¹⁶⁴ If sweeping new federal regulations are not enacted, incremental changes likely will continue in the states, especially in relation to the growing trend toward decreasing the amount of public school testing. Student assessments that have any affiliation with the Common Core of State Standards also likely will be phased out and replaced with other college- and career-ready testing alternatives.

State and federal student assessment policies generally are directed at four primary objectives: 1) identifying at-risk students for intervention; 2) monitoring student performance to ensure adequate progress in learning; 3) collecting information about student strengths and weaknesses to guide instruction; and 4) determining if instruction provided was effective toward meeting standards of learning. Even with the federal ESEA rewrite still outstanding, state legislatures will continue to experiment with multiple strategies geared toward attaining these educational objectives.

Endnotes

- 1) DeNisco, Alison. "New School Year Brings Testing Changes." *District Administration Magazine*. September 2015. <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/new-school-year-brings-testing-changes> (accessed September 1, 2015).
- 2) "Testing: Frequently Asked Questions." U.S. Department of Labor. (October 13, 2012). <http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/accountability/ayp/testing-faq.html> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 3) "Obama Administration Sets High Bar for Flexibility from No Child Left Behind in Order to Advance Equity and Support Reform." U.S. Department of Education. (September 23, 2011). <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/obama-administration-sets-high-bar-flexibility-no-child-left-behind-order-advance-equity-and-support-reform> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 4) "ESEA Flexibility." U.S. Department of Education. (February 25, 2015). <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 5) Crouch, Elisa. "Missouri Legislature Throws Common Core Test out the Window." *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. June 4, 2015. http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/missouri-legislature-throws-common-core-test-out-the-window/article_09441f40-b77a-5f0d-ae9f-7678a30d551a.html (accessed June 3, 2015).
- 6) Gewertz, Catherine. "Alabama Withdraws From Both Testing Consortia." *Education Week - Curriculum Matters*. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/02/alabama_withdraws_from_both_te.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-FB (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 7) Tew, Joana. "The Influence of the Online ACT Aspire in Alabama | Edutopia." February 14, 2015. <http://www.edutopia.org/discussion/influence-online-act-aspire-alabama> (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 8) "Student Assessment > ACT Aspire Information." Alabama State Department of Education. <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sa/Pages/assessmentdetails.aspx?AssessmentName=ACT%20Aspire&navtext=ACT%20Aspire> (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 9) "Student Assessment > ACT Plus Writing Information." Alabama State Department of Education. <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sa/Pages/assessmentdetails.aspx?AssessmentName=ACT%20Plus%20Writing&navtext=ACT%20Plus%20Writing> (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 10) "Student Assessment > ACT WorkKeys Information." Alabama State Department of Education. <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sa/Pages/assessmentdetails.aspx?AssessmentName=ACT%20WorkKeys&navtext=ACT%20WorkKeys> (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 11) "ACT QualityCore: 2015-2016." Alabama State Department of Education. <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sa/Testing/ACT%20QualityCore%20v%202.pdf> (accessed September 2, 2015).
- 12) State Superintendent of Education Thomas B. Rice. "Memorandum to City and County Superintendents of Education" May 11, 2015. <https://www.alsde.edu/sites/memos/Memoranda/FY15-3037.pdf> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 13) Ibid.
- 14) "Memorandum to City and County Superintendents." Deputy State Superintendent of Education Sherrill W. Parris. March 17, 2015. <https://www.alsde.edu/sites/memos/Memoranda/FY15-2049.pdf> (accessed September 16, 2015).
- 15) "Education Board Passes Switch to ACT." *Arkansas Online*. <http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2015/jul/09/ed-board-parcc-act/> (accessed July 14, 2015).
- 16) "Common Core State Standards." State Board of Education | Arkansas Department of Education. <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/curriculum-and-instruction/common-core-state-standards> (accessed October 21, 2015).
- 17) "ACT Aspire." Arkansas Department of Education. <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/assessment/act-aspire> (accessed September 4, 2015).
- 18) "The ACT." Arkansas Department of Education. <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/assessment/the-act> (accessed September 4, 2015).
- 19) "Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Helps Students Start Kindergarten Ready." Arkansas Research Center. https://arc.arkansas.gov/arc_web/resources/publications/ABC_Qualls_Report.pdf (accessed September 4, 2015).
- 20) "K-2 Assessment." Arkansas Department of Education. <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/assessment/k-2-assessment> (accessed September 4, 2015).
- 21) "Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program: A Note to Parents." Arkansas Department of Education. http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/Learning_Services/Student%20Assessment/2015/Iowa_Note_To_Parents.pdf (accessed September 4, 2015).
- 22) "About the FSAs." Florida Department of Education. <http://fsassessments.org/about-the-fsas/> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 23) Vander Hart, Shane. "Rick Scott Pulls Florida Out of PARCC." *Truth in American Education*. September 23, 2013. <http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-assessments/rick-scott-pulls-florida-out-of-parcc/> (accessed October 5, 2015).
- 24) "Florida Standards." Florida Department of Education. <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/florida-standards/> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 25) McGrory, Kathleen. "Florida Education Department Gives Nonprofit \$220 Million Contract to Replace the FCAT." *Tampa Bay Times*. March 17, 2014. <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/florida-education-department-selects-new-state-tests/2170571> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 26) Nielsen, Allison. "FSA Server Issue Leaves Students Unable to Take Tests Statewide." *Sunshine State News | Florida Political News*. April 19, 2015. <http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/fsa-server-issue-leaves-students-unable-to-take-tests-statewide> (accessed September 8, 2015).

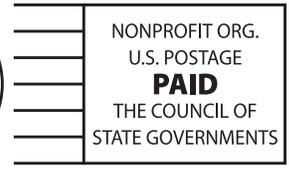
- 27) O'Connor, John. "Meet Florida's New Statewide Test." *StateImpact Florida*. November 24, 2014. <https://stateimpact.npr.org/florida/2014/11/24/meet-floridas-new-statewide-test/> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 28) Nielsen, Allison. "Rick Scott Signs Bill to Cut Back on Standardized Testing." *Sunshine State News | Florida Political News*. April 13, 2015. <http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/rick-scott-signs-bill-cut-back-standardized-testing> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 29) Nielsen, Allison. "Panel Picks Utah Contractor to Validate Florida Standards Assessment." *Sunshine State News | Florida Political News*. May 30, 2015. <http://sunshinestatenews.com/story/panel-picks-utah-contractor-validate-florida-standards-assessment> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 30) Nielsen, Allison. "Independent Study: Florida Standards Assessment Is Valid." *Sunshine State News | Florida Political News*. September 1, 2015. <http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/independent-study-florida-standards-assessment-valid> (accessed September 3, 2015).
- 31) *Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment*. Alpine Testing Solutions and edCount. August 31, 2015. https://feaweb.org/_data/files/2015_DOE/FSA_VValidity_Study/FSA-Exec-Summ_08312015.pdf (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 32) O'Connor, John. "Test Review Raises Questions About Florida Standards Assessments Results." *StateImpact Florida*. September 1, 2015. <https://stateimpact.npr.org/florida/2015/09/01/test-review-raises-questions-about-florida-standards-assessments-results/> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 33) Postal, Leslie. "Key State Lawmakers like Idea of Dumping State Exams." *OrlandoSentinel.com*. August 26, 2015. <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/features/education/os-florida-fsa-national-tests-lawmakers-20150826-story.html> (accessed August 31, 2015).
- 34) "End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments." Florida Department of Education. <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/end-of-course-eoc-assessments> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 35) "2014-2015 FSA and FCAT/FCAT 2.0/ NGSSS EOC Assessment Accommodations: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)." Florida Standards Assessments. <http://fsassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2014-2015-Assessment-Accommodations-FAQ.pdf> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 36) Florida State Statutes. Title XLVIII, §1002-69.
- 37) "Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)." Florida Department of Education. http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/providers/provider_resources/florida_kindergarten_readiness_screener.aspx (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 38) "Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading." Florida Department of Education. <http://www.justreadflorida.com/instreading.asp> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 39) "Common Placement Testing." Florida Department of Education. <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/common-placement-testing.shtml> (accessed September 8, 2015).
- 40) "Georgia Withdrawing from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium." Georgia Department of Education. <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=123> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 41) "Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT)." Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/CRCT.aspx> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 42) *Georgia Student Assessment Program Student Assessment Handbook: 2014 - 2015*. Georgia Department of Education. <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/Student%20Assessment%20Handbook%202014-2015%20FINAL%2092214.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 43) *Georgia Student Assessment Program Student Assessment Handbook: 2015 - 2016*. Georgia Department of Education. http://www.lamar.k12.ga.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_219936/File/District/Departments/Teaching%20&%20Learning/Testing/2015-2016%20Student%20Assessment%20Handbook.pdf (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 44) Farner, Keith. "Ga. DOE to Receive \$4.5 Million after Georgia Milestones Glitches." *Gwinnett Daily Post*. June 10, 2015. <http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/news/2015/jun/10/ga-doe-to-receive-45-million-after-georgia/> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 45) Downey, Maureen. "Test Maker Will Compensate Georgia for Recent Testing Glitches | Get Schooled." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. June 10, 2015. <http://getschooled.blog.ajc.com/2015/06/10/test-maker-will-compensate-georgia-for-recent-testing-glitches/> (accessed September 9, 2015).
- 46) Farner, Keith. "Few Students Show Proficiency in Georgia Milestones Results." *Gwinnett Daily Post*. September 3, 2015. <http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/news/2015/sep/03/few-students-show-proficiency-in-georgia/> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 47) Robins, Kayla. "Officials: Georgia Milestones Reflect Lower Scores, Higher Bar." *Forsyth County News*. September 7, 2015. <http://www.forsythnews.com/section/3/article/28137/> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 48) "Closing the 'Honesty Gap' in Georgia." The Honesty Gap. <http://www.honestygap.org/state/georgia/> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 49) Tagami, Ty. "Fewer Tests Required in Georgia Schools." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. July 27, 2015. <http://www.myajc.com/news/news/local-education/state-superintendent-rolls-back-some-test-requirem/nm7Nj/> (accessed July 31, 2015).
- 50) "With reduction of SLO assessments, Georgia students will take fewer tests." Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=351> (accessed September 10, 2015).

- 51) "About GKIDS." Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/About%20GKIDS.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 52) "A Parent's Guide to the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills." Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/GKIDS/GKIDS%20Parent%20Brochure%202015-16.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 53) "Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT)." Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Georgia-High-School-Writing-Test.aspx> (accessed September 10, 2015).
- 54) Davis, Janel. "New Law Lets Thousands Get What They Missed in High School: A..." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. May 17, 2015. <http://www.myajc.com/news/news/local-education/new-law-lets-thousands-get-what-they-missed-in-hig/nmHNk/> (accessed May 18, 2015).
- 55) Gewertz, Catherine. "Kentucky Withdraws From PARCC Testing Consortium." *Education Week - Curriculum Matters*. January 31, 2014. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2014/01/kentucky_withdraws_from_parcc_.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-FB (accessed September 11, 2015).
- 56) Hu, Adrienne. "Shares of The Testing Market | Green And Write – Education Policy Research Insights." College of Education, Michigan State University. (May 5, 2015). <http://edwp.educ.msu.edu/green-and-write/2015/shares-of-the-testing-market/> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 57) "PARCC | Home." <http://parcc.pearson.com/> (accessed September 11, 2015).
- 58) "Kentucky Department of Education : K-PREP." <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Pages/K-PREP.aspx> (accessed September 11, 2015).
- 59) "2015 K-PREP Number of Items and Testing Times." Kentucky Department of Education. <http://education.ky.gov/AA/distsupp/Pages/Data-Release-Resources.aspx> (accessed September 11, 2015).
- 60) "ACT Explore." Kentucky Department of Education. <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Pages/EXPLORE.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 61) "ACT." Kentucky Department of Education. <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Pages/ACT.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 62) "Compass." Kentucky Department of Education. <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Pages/COMPASS.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 63) "KYOTE." Kentucky Department of Education. September 1, 2015. <http://education.ky.gov/AA/Assessments/Pages/KYOTE.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 64) "DESCRIPTION OF CAREER MEASURES." Kentucky Department of Education. <http://education.ky.gov/KBE/meet/documents/June%202011%20Workkeys%20KOSSA%20Ind%20Descrip%20Attach%20B.pdf> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 65) "Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards and Assessments: Frequently Asked Questions." Madison County Schools. http://www.madison.k12.ky.us/userfiles/2/Assessment/KOSSA_FAQ.pdf (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 66) "DESCRIPTION OF CAREER MEASURES." (see endnote 64.)
- 67) "Kentucky Department of Education : Common Kindergarten Entry Screener." <http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/conpro/prim-pre/Pages/Common-Kindergarten-Entry-Screener.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 68) "Primary Diagnostic Guidelines." Kentucky Department of Education. August 2015. <http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/conpro/prim-pre/Documents/Primary%20Diagnostic%20Guidelines.doc> (accessed September 14, 2015).
- 69) Williams, Jessica. "Bobby Jindal Signs Common Core Compromise, Touts Local Control." *The Times-Picayune*. June 29, 2015. http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2015/06/bobby_jindal_signs_common_core.html (accessed September 15, 2015).
- 70) "2015-2016 Assessments." Louisiana Department of Education. <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/2015-2016-assessment-changes.pdf?sfvrsn=4> (accessed September 15, 2015).
- 71) "Louisiana Social Studies Updates." Louisiana Department of Education. <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/links-for-newsletters/05-26-15-social-studies-update-timeline.pdf?sfvrsn=2> (accessed September 15, 2015).
- 72) "EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, WORKKEYS." <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/assessment/explore-plan-act-workkeys> (accessed September 16, 2015).
- 73) "JUMP START STUDENTS PURSUE WORKKEYS TEST, TOPS TECH AWARDS." Louisiana Department of Education. December 9, 2014. <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2014/12/09/jump-start-students-pursue-workkeys-test-tops-tech-awards> (accessed September 16, 2015).
- 74) "DIBELS Next." <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/assessment/dibels-next> (accessed September 16, 2015).
- 75) "Mississippi to Withdraw from PARCC Consortium." (Mississippi Department of Education. January 16, 2015). <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/TD/news/2015/01/16/mississippi-to-withdraw-from-parcc-consortium> (accessed September 17, 2015).
- 76) "State Board Approves Statewide Assessment Contract with Questar Assessment Inc." Mississippi Department of Education. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/TD/news/2015/04/16/state-board-approves-statewide-assessment-contract-with-questar-assessment-inc-> (accessed October 21, 2015).
- 77) "3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment." Mississippi Department of Education. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/RSA> (accessed September 17, 2015).
- 78) "Mississippi Science Test (MST2) Grades 5 & 8." Mississippi Department of Education. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/MST2> (accessed September 17, 2015).
- 79) "Student Assessment SATP2." Mississippi Department of Education. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/SATP2> (accessed September 17, 2015).

- 80) "ACT State Testing." (Mississippi Department of Education). <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/Osa/ACT> (accessed September 17, 2015).
- 81) "Assessment." Mississippi State University. <http://www.rcu.msstate.edu/Assessment.aspx> (accessed September 18, 2015).
- 82) "K-Readiness Assessment" (Mississippi Department of Education). <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/Osa/KRA> (accessed September 17, 2015).
- 83) "Universal Screener and Diagnostic Assessment." Mississippi Department of Education. <http://www.mdek12.org/Osa/universal-screener-and-diagnostic-assessment> (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 84) Flanigan, Tom. *House Bill 2*. 2015. <http://www.house.mo.gov/billsummary.aspx?bill=HB2> (accessed September 18, 2015).
- 85) "Letter to Mr. Tony Albert, Executive Director, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium." Missouri Assistant Commissioner Sharon Helwig. July 8, 2015. http://www.missourifreedom.com/sites/default/files/smarter_balanced_assessment_letter.pdf (accessed September 18, 2015).
- 86) Ujifusa, Andrew. "Missouri Drops Smarter Balanced Common-Core Exam." *Education Week - State EdWatch*. June 3, 2015. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/state_edwatch/2015/06/missouri_drops_smarter_balanced_common-core_exam.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-FB (accessed September 18, 2015).
- 87) *LEA Guide to the Missouri Assessment Program 2015-2016 v1*. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/asmt-guide-to-missouri-assessment-program-1516-v1.pdf> (accessed September 22, 2015).
- 88) "Missouri Assessment Program." Missouri Learning Standards. <http://www.missourilearningstandards.com/missouri-assessment-program/> (accessed September 22, 2015).
- 89) *LEA Guide* (see endnote 87).
- 90) "School Readiness Tool." Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. <http://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/early-learning/school-readiness-tool> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 91) "Member States." Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/about/member-states/> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 92) "NC Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) for English Language Arts." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. March 20, 2015. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/technotes/elatestspecs15.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 93) "NC Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) for Mathematics." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. March 10, 2015. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/technotes/mathtests15.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 94) "North Carolina READY Beginning-of-Grade 3 English Language Arts/Reading Test." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. November 3, 2014. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/policyoperations/assessbriefs/bog3ab14b.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 95) "North Carolina Testing Program Operational Calendar." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/calendars/1516testcaldraft.pdf> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 96) "North Carolina Essential Standards for Science." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. March 20, 2015. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/technotes/scitestspecs15.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 97) "North Carolina End-of-Course Tests." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eoc/> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 98) "NC Race to the Top." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/rtt/> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 99) Guindon, Micah, et al. *How Much Testing is Taking Place in North Carolina Schools at Grades K-12?* Financial and Business Services Internship Program, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. August 2014. <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/intern-research/reports/testing2014.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 100) "North Carolina Final Exams for 2015-16." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/common-exams/1516ncfe.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2015).
- 101) "North Carolina Testing Program: Required Testing 2015-16." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/1516reqtests.pdf> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 102) Smith, Storie. "WorkKeys: Career and Technical Education." Cumberland County Schools. (February 27, 2015). <http://cte.ccs.k12.nc.us/workkeys/> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 103) North Carolina's Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM). State Board of Education, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. October 2013. <http://cdm.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/file/view/CDM.DPIGuidelines.FINAL.10.13.pdf> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 104) Guindon, Micah, et. al. (see endnote 99).
- 105) "NC K-3 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESS: KINDERGARTEN ENTRY." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. http://keapilot.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/file/view/KEA_document_6.25.14.pdf/514928990/KEA_document_6.25.14.pdf (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 106) Dunn, Andrew. "Kindergarten Students in NC to Face New Standardized Test next Year." *The Charlotte Observer*. March 21, 2015. <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/education/your-schools-blog/article15519185.html> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 107) "K-2 Formative Instructional and Assessment Tasks for the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics." North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <http://commoncoretasks.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/home> (accessed September 25, 2015).

- 108) “English Language Arts FAQ
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/languagearts/faq/#elem1> (accessed September 25, 2015).
- 109) Eger, Andrea. “State Pulling out of Standardized Testing through Consortium.” *Tulsa World*. July 1, 2013.
http://www.tulsaworld.com/archives/state-pulling-out-of-standardized-testing-through-consortium/article_89fdf0f8-c35b-5398-9936-671f5545166e.html (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 110) Cavanagh, Sean. “Under Pressure, Okla. Hires Measured Progress to Oversee Winter Tests.” *Education Week - Marketplace K-12*. October 18, 2014. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/marketplacek12/2014/10/under_pressure_okla_hires_measured_progress_to_oversee_winter_tests.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-FB (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 111) “State Testing Resources.” Oklahoma State Department of Education. <http://ok.gov/sde/assessment-administrator-resources-administrators> (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 112) “Oklahoma Academic Standards.” Oklahoma State Department of Education. <http://ok.gov/sde/oklahoma-academic-standards> (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 113) “Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) v01.09.15.pdf” Measured Progress. <http://www2.measuredprogress.org/static/OK/materials/Oklahoma%20School%20Testing%20Program%20%28OSTP%29%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20%28FAQ%29%20v01.09.15.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 114) “Oklahoma Academic Standards.” (see endnote 112.)
- 115) “Assessment Materials.” Oklahoma State Department of Education. <http://ok.gov/sde/documents/2013-09-05/blue-prints-plds-item-specs> (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 116) *Oklahoma School Testing Program: 2013-2014 Test Preparation Manual*. Oklahoma State Department of Education. http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/documents/files/2705543-W_tpm_w13OK.pdf (accessed September 29, 2015).
- 117) Oklahoma Administrative Code. “Section 210:15-27-1. Reading Sufficiency Plans and Summer Academy Reading Programs.” http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/RSA_Rules_July2015.pdf (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 118) “Oklahoma State Board Approved K-3 Formative Assessments.” Oklahoma State Department of Education. http://www.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/documents/files/RSA-K-3ApprovedFormativeAssessments_2.pdf (accessed October 20, 2015).
- 119) House Bill 3893 of 2013.
http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120_2013-2014/bills/3893.htm (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 120) “New Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/new-standards-for-english-language-arts-and-mathematics/> (accessed October 21, 2015).
- 121) Kerr, Amanda. “South Carolina Panel Upholds Ruling to End ACT Contract after One Year.” *Post and Courier*. March 25, 2015.
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20150325/PC16/150329541> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 122) “Assessment.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/ac/Assessment/> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 123) “ACT Aspire.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/214/index.cfm> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 124) “SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS).” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/45/index.cfm> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 125) “End-of-Course Examination Program.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/41/index.cfm> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 126) “State Assessments.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/data/state-assessments/> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 127) “High School Assessment Program (HSAP).” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/43/index.cfm> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 128) “State Assessments.” (see endnote 126.)
- 129) “Readiness Assessment Program.” South Carolina Department of Education. <https://ed.sc.gov/tests/elementary/pre-k-and-kindergarten-readiness-assessments/> (accessed September 30, 2015).
- 130) Gewertz, Catherine. “Tennessee Quits PARCC, Leaving 15 Members.” *Education Week - Curriculum Matters*. June 20, 2014.
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2014/06/tennessee_quits_parcc.html (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 131) Tatter, Grace. “Measurement Inc. Inks \$108 Million Testing Contract.” *Chalkbeat Tennessee*. November 12, 2014.
<http://tn.chalkbeat.org/2014/11/12/measurement-inc-inks-108-million-testing-contract/> (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 132) “TN Core | About TN Standards.” Tennessee Department of Education. http://tncore.org/about_tn_standards.aspx (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 133) “2015-16 Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program Calendar.” Tennessee Department of Education. http://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/tst_tcap_assessment_calendar_2015-16.pdf (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 134) “Writing Assessment - TN.Gov.” Tennessee Department of Education. <http://www.tn.gov/education/topic/Writing-Assessment> (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 135) “2015-16 Testing Dates - TN.Gov.” Tennessee Department of Education. <http://www.tn.gov/education/topic/testing-dates> (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 136) “K-2 Assessment Information - TN.Gov.” Tennessee Department of Education. <https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/grades-k-2-assessment> (accessed October 1, 2015).

- 137) Final Report: Tennessee Task Force on Student Testing and Assessment. Tennessee Department of Education. September 2015. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/2423255/final-tn-task-force-on-student-testing-and.pdf> (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 138) Ibid.
- 139) "Assessment Task Force - TN.Gov." Tennessee Department of Education. <http://tn.gov/education/topic/assessment-task-force> (accessed October 1, 2015).
- 140) "STAAR Resources." Texas Education Agency. <http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/> (accessed October 2, 2015).
- 141) Hu, Adrienne. "Shares of The Testing Market | Green And Write – Education Policy Research Insights."
- 142) McGaughy, Lauren. "Texas Set to Switch Testing Vendor, Reducing Role of British Education Giant." *Houston Chronicle*. May 19, 2015. <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Texas-set-to-switch-testing-vendor-drops-6271843.php> (accessed October 5, 2015).
- 143) Weiss, Jeffrey. "Pearson Loses Texas Contract for Standardized Exams." May 19, 2015. <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/headlines/20150518-pearson-loses-texas-contract-for-standardized-exams.ece> (accessed October 5, 2015).
- 144) "Early Childhood Data System (ECDS) and Compliance with Kindergarten Reading Assessment Data Submission." Texas Education Agency. [http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Correspondence/TAA_Letters/Early_Childhood_Data_System_\(ECDS\)_and_Compliance_with_Kindergarten_Reading_Assessment_Data_Submission/](http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Correspondence/TAA_Letters/Early_Childhood_Data_System_(ECDS)_and_Compliance_with_Kindergarten_Reading_Assessment_Data_Submission/) (accessed October 5, 2015).
- 145) "2014-2018 Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments for Texas Public Schools and Charter Schools." Texas Education Agency. http://tea.texas.gov/uploadedFiles/Curriculum/English_-_Language_Arts/attachments/Commissioner's%20List%20of%20Reading%20Instruments%202014-2015.pdf (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 146) Ibid.
- 147) "Early Reading Instruments (ERI) Reimbursement Information and Form." <http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769807890&libID=25769807892> (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 148) "VDOE :: Standards of Learning (SOL) and Testing." Virginia Department of Education. <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml> (accessed October 6, 2015).
- 149) Strong, Ted. "Computer Problems Disrupt Virginia's SOL Testing for Third Time." *The Roanoke Times*. May 21, 2015. http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/computer-problems-disrupt-virginia-s-sol-testing-for-third-time/article_bbead2a5-ae0-575c-b121-8a0d34f8f799.html (accessed October 21, 2015).
- 150) "SOL Test Results for Schools, School Divisions and the Commonwealth: 2014-2015 Test Administration." Virginia Department of Education. http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/accreditation_federal_reports/sol_test_results_pass_rates/2014-15_state_test.xlsx (accessed October 6, 2015).
- 151) "VDOE :: Locally Developed Assessments." Virginia Department of Education. http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/local_assessments/index.shtml (accessed October 6, 2015).
- 152) "VDOE :: Early Intervention Reading Initiative (ERI)." Virginia Department of Education. http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/english/elementary/reading/early_intervention_reading.shtml (accessed October 6, 2015).
- 153) "Background of PALS." University of Virginia. <https://pals.virginia.edu/rd-background.html> (accessed October 6, 2015).
- 154) "Member States." Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/about/member-states/> (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 155) "Data Privacy: West Virginia General Summative Assessment." West Virginia Board of Education. http://static.k12.wv.us/superintendent/doc/dataprivacy_flyer.pdf (accessed October 21, 2015).
- 156) "West Virginia Board of Education Waiver Approval." West Virginia Board of Education. February 12, 2015. <http://files.k12.wv.us/bjj/ordan/9b3b2g5vkkws4o/Policy%202340%20Waiver%20Approval.pdf> (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 157) "West Virginia State Assessments Overview." National Parents Teacher Association. <http://wv.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/WV-State-Assessments-Overview.pptx> (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 158) *West Virginia Compass User Guide: 2014-2015*. West Virginia Department of Education. <https://goo.gl/IPJi5C> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 159) West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2340. <https://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2340&alt=1> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 160) "ACT Compass." <https://www.act.org/products/higher-education-act-compass/> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 161) Riley-Ayers, Shannon, et al. *Early Learning Scale Technical Report*. National Institute for Early Education Research. September 2010. http://nieer.org/pdf/Early_learning_scale_tech_report_Sept_2010.pdf (accessed October 7, 2015).
- 162) *West Virginia School Readiness Profile 2014*. West Virginia Board of Education. <https://wvde.state.wv.us/ready-set-go/doc/2014-school-readiness-profile.pdf> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 163) *West Virginia Early Learning Readiness: Kindergarten Resource Guide*. West Virginia Department of Education. Spring 2014. <https://wvde.state.wv.us/oel/docs/workbook2.pdf> (accessed October 8, 2015).
- 164) "Fact Sheet: Testing Action Plan." U.S. Department of Education. October 24, 2015. <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-testing-action-plan> (accessed October 27, 2015).



Southern Office of
The Council of State Governments
 P.O. Box 98129
 Atlanta, Georgia 30359
www.slcatlanta.org

Colleen Cousineau
 Director, SLC
 Deputy Executive Director, CSG

SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

THE SOUTHERN OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

REGIONAL VIEW NATIONAL REACH

This report was prepared by Mikko Lindberg, Policy Analyst for the Education Committee of the Southern Legislative Conference (SLC) of The Council of State Governments (CSG), under the chairmanship of Senator Dolores Gresham of Tennessee. This report reflects the body of policy research made available to appointed and elected officials by the Southern Office.

The Southern Office of The Council of State Governments, located in Atlanta, Georgia, fosters and encourages inter-governmental cooperation among its 15 member states. In large measure, this is achieved through the ongoing work of the standing committees of its Southern Legislative Conference. Through member outreach in state capitols, policy research, international member delegations, staff exchange programs, meetings and fly-ins, staff support state

policymakers and legislative staff in their work to build a stronger region.

Founded in 1947, the SLC is a member-driven organization and the largest of four regional legislative groups operating under CSG and comprises the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

The SLC's six standing committees provide a forum which allows policymakers to share knowledge in their area of expertise with colleagues from across the South. By working together within the SLC and participating on its committees, Southern state legislative leaders are able to speak in a distinctive, unified voice while addressing issues that affect their states and the entire region.