

## Common Core State Standards

### Key Terms and Acronyms

#### **Achievement Level Descriptors**

Describe what students know and can do based on their performance on knowledge and skills tests in the various content areas. The levels identify what students are expected to know and be able to do, at each grade level, to be considered proficient.

#### **Alternate Assessment**

The alternate tests, which aim to assess the knowledge of mathematics and English-language arts in grades 3–8 and once in high school, will be accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities. These assessments will be aligned to the same Common Core State Standards recently developed by governors and chief state school officers, as well as adopted by 46 states and the District of Columbia (as of November 17, 2011). They also are expected to fit cohesively within the comprehensive assessment systems under development by the federal grant recipients, the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), of the Race to the Top initiative.

#### **Assessment**

The process of measuring, usually in numerical terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs; measurement of student growth; assessment tool choice is dependent on the purpose and use of measurement results; See also: Authentic Assessment, Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT), Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA), Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), Norm-Referenced Test (NRT), Diagnostic Assessment, Formative Assessment/Evaluation, Functional Assessment, Standardized Assessment, Summative Assessment/Evaluation

#### **Assessment Consortia**

In 2010 and 2011, the U.S. Department of Education awarded a total of five grants to the Consortia of states to support the development of new assessment systems — two *Comprehensive Assessment Consortia*, two *Alternate Assessment Consortia*, and one *English Proficiency Assessment Consortium*.

- General Assessments
  - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
  - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)
- Alternate Assessments
  - Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium (DLMAASC)
  - National Center and State Collaborative Partnership (NCSC)
- ELL Assessments
  - Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS)
  - English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century Consortium (ELPA21)



### **Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS)**

WIDA is the Project Management Partner for the ASSETS Consortium, a collaboration designed to create an innovative technology-based assessment system supporting English learners. The system will be operational in 2015-16. The consortium will develop a next generation assessment system to measure English language proficiency linked to Common Core State Standards that will include K-12 assessments, be technology based, provide interim and annual assessments, and provide screeners for identification and placement. As managing partner, WIDA is working with partners at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), WestEd, UCLA, MetriTech, Inc., and Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) on all aspects of project planning, test development, governance support, budget monitoring, and communications.

### **Authentic Student Voice**

Student voice rooted in agency and self-regulation, leading to deep engagement of learners in directing and owning their own learning process.

### **Benchmark Exams**

Exam used to decide whether or not an individual child at an age or grade is performing above or below typical peers; can be determined in relation to local norms, national norms, and predictive value.

### **Collaboration**

Collegial process wherein two or more colleagues share expertise with each other; to implement instructional or behavior strategies to benefit student/young adult learning

### **Common Core's Curriculum Maps**

Curriculum planning documents that teachers can use as a resource for making their own more detailed curricula and lesson plans. They translate the new Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten through 12th grade into unit maps that teachers can use:

- to plan their year,
- craft their own more detailed curriculum,
- and create lesson plans.

### **Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE)**

Specific statements of the content and skills that are linked to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) grade level specific expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

### **Common Core State Standards Initiative**

A state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.

### **Communities of Practice (CoP)**

Concept referring to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations

**Computer Adaptive Testing**

Often referred to as CAT, this is a form of computerized testing that individually adapts to the ability level of the person taking the test by adjusting the difficulty of examination items depending on performance on previous items. This adaptation of test items to match the ability level of the test-taker enables a more accurate measurement of student ability using fewer items than a standardized paper and pencil test.

**Construct Viable Arguments**

Use observations and prior knowledge (stated assumptions, definitions, and previous established results) to make conjectures and construct arguments.

**Council of Chief State School Officers CCSSO**

The Council of Chief State School Officers is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. CCSSO and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) have released a set of state-led education standards, the Common Core State Standards. The English-language arts and mathematics standards for grades K-12 were developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including content experts, states, teachers, school administrators and parents. The standards establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare America's children for success in college and work. CCSSO has worked in collaboration with members, partners and thought leaders to identify four areas of focus that will lead the systems change necessary for a true transformation of teaching and learning. Those areas are Next Generation Learning; Standards, Assessment, and Accountability; System of Educator Development; and Comprehensive Data Systems.

**Data-driven**

Instructional decisions based on student performance data

**Dynamic Assessment**

Dynamic assessment is an interactive approach to conducting assessments within the domains of psychology, speech/language, or education that focuses on the ability of the learner to respond to intervention.

**Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium (DLM)**

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium seeks to create an assessment system to support teachers in improving the learning of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (SCD). The new DLM alternate assessment system will let students with significant cognitive disabilities show what they know in ways that traditional multiple-choice tests cannot. The DLM system is designed to map a student's learning throughout the year. The system will use items and tasks that are embedded in day-to-day instruction. In this way, testing happens as part of instruction, which both informs teaching and benefits students. An end of the year assessment will be created for states that want to include a summative test in addition to the instructionally embedded system.

**Embedded Tasks**

A context-embedded task is one in which the student has access to a range of additional visual and oral cues

**English Language Learners (ELL)**

Children and or adults whose second language is English

**English Language Proficiency**

English proficiency is the ability to speak, read and/or write in English. To be considered truly proficient, one should have advanced abilities in all three areas of communication.

**Evaluation**

Systematic measurement of value or worth in relation to a set of criteria or a specific standard/expectation; See also Summative Assessment

**Evidence-based**

Educational practices/instructional strategies supported by relevant scientific research studies

**Fixed Form Summative Assessment**

This means all students will receive statistically identical test items for any given grade/subject/course — that is, the assessments will be nonadaptive

**Formative Assessment/Evaluation**

Classroom/curriculum measures of student progress; monitors progress made towards achieving learning outcomes; informs instructional decision-making

**Growth model**

A method used to measure the gains of individual students over time. An accountability system using growth modeling creates a measurement of a student's *progress* toward standards, which contrasts with the current accountability model under NCLB, Adequate Yearly Progress, or "AYP," that uses a pass-fail measurement based on a *point-in-time* assessment of proficiency.

**Learning Maps**

A learning map is a network of sequenced learning targets. Often, we think of learning as one skill building on another single skill. A dynamic learning map, by comparison, shows a learning landscape in which multiple skills are related to many other skills. Dynamic learning maps not only show the relationships between skills but also show multiple learning pathways. Instead of assuming that all children learn a skill in the same way, allowing for multiple pathways recognizes that there are alternate ways to learn the same skill.

**National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

Often referred to as "the nation's report card," NAEP is the largest nationally representative, ongoing assessment of what students learn and can do in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. Not every student takes NAEP; results are based on representative samples of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 for the main assessments. NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools, though results for some large urban districts can be produced. Because the assessment essentially stays the same from year to year, the results provide a common metric for all states and provide a national measure of student academic progress over time.



### **National Center and State Collaborative Partnership**

The NCSC partnership is focused on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS). The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is applying the lessons learned from the past decade of research on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to develop a multi-state comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The project draws on a strong research base to develop an AA-AAS that is built from the ground up on powerful validity arguments linked to clear learning outcomes and defensible assessment results, to complement the work of the Race to the Top Common State Assessment Program (RTTA) consortia. Appropriately challenging alternate assessment on alternate achievement standards, based on grade-level content; with different achievement expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities will be utilized.

### **National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center)**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort, launched more than a year ago by state leaders, including governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia, through their membership in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

### **Next Generation Learners Initiative**

An initiative of the Council of Chief State School Officers to create a system of supports that engages each child—from birth through early adulthood, in the totality of his or her circumstance—in learning so they are prepared for life, meaningful work, and citizenship. Concentrates on the elements of education that have direct bearing on students and their learning experiences and focuses on learners and learning, rather than on schools and schooling.

### **Next Generation Science Standards**

Through a collaborative, state-led process managed by Achieve, new K–12 science standards are being developed that will be rich in content and practice, arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide all students an internationally benchmarked science education. The NGSS will be based on the Framework for K–12 Science Education developed by the National Research Council.

### **Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)**

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a consortium of states working together to develop a common set of K-12 assessments in English and math anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers. These new K-12 assessments will build a pathway to college and career readiness by the end of high school, mark students' progress toward this goal from 3rd grade up, and provide teachers with timely information to inform instruction and provide student support. The PARCC assessments will be ready for states to administer during the 2014-15 school year.

### **Performance-based learning**

Performance-based learning puts students at the center of the learning process by enabling demonstration of mastery based on clear and commonly-shared expectations.

**Personalizing learning**

Calls for a data-driven framework to set goals, assess progress, and ensure students receive needed academic and developmental supports.

**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) is a state-led consortium working to develop next-generation assessments that accurately measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness. Smarter Balanced is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education in 2010 to develop an assessment system aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by the 2014-15 school year. SBAC will create required summative assessments; a retake option; optional formative, or benchmark, exams and tools, processes and practices for use in planning and implementing informal, ongoing assessment. *The Transition to the Common Core Work Group* — one of ten state-led Smarter Balanced work groups — will identify high-quality curriculum resources aligned to the CCSS, and professional development strategies that can be replicated across states.

**Standardized Assessment**

Tests administered to large groups of students, using the same administrative procedures, for the purpose of measuring academic achievement and/or comparing growth of learning in relation to students at the same grade or age range

**Summative Assessment/Evaluation**

Comprehensive in nature, provides accountability and is used to check the level of learning at the point of expected mastery; measures growth in relation to a specific set of criteria or standard/expectation

**Text Complexity**

Is defined by:

*Qualitative measures* –levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands often best measured by an attentive human reader.

*Quantitative measures* –readability and other scores of text complexity often best measured by computer software.

*Reader and Task considerations* –background knowledge of reader, motivation, interests, and complexity generated by tasks assigned often best made by educators employing their professional judgment.

**Through-Course Testing**

Students take parts of the summative assessment at key times during the school year, closer to when they learn the material.

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

Process of designing instruction that is accessible by all students; UDL includes multiple means of representation, multiple means of expression, and multiple means of engagement; the focus in creation of UDL curricula is on technology and materials

**Value-added model**

A measurement of student progress that compares how a student performs to a prediction of how that student *should* perform based on past performance. Value-added assessment is currently of interest to policymakers as states and districts consider compensation models for



teachers *American Youth Policy Forum, 2011* based on how much value they are adding to student learning, as measured by test scores for individual students.

**World-class knowledge and skills**

Encompass the content knowledge and thinking skills required for success in a globally-oriented world.

This document was generated within the IDEA Partnership by cross-stakeholders representing teachers, administrators, related service personnel, family members and youth, state education agencies, higher education, technical assistance providers, and assessment consortia.