



TO: RIDE Leadership Team

FROM: ESSA Committee of Practitioners

DATE: October 28, 2016

SUBJECT: Committee of Practitioners Input on the continuation of PARCC and NECAP assessments in grades K-8

The following is a summary of the Committee of Practitioners' input from a meeting on August 24, 2016. Committee members discussed implementation of state assessments, including the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) for Math and Literacy in grades K-8, and the New England Common Assessment Program for Science (NECAP). After consultation with constituents, members shared primary concerns and questions regarding implementation of these assessments, as well as perceived benefits. More information on the input activity can be found [here](#). The notes here do not represent consensus but rather a high level overview of the most frequent and representative comments.

Primary **concerns and needs for clarification** for the continued implementation of PARCC and NECAP include:

Time and Technology: Committee members shared concerns regarding testing administration, including logistics for set-up, as well as appropriateness of the testing format:

- "PARCC monopolizes time in a school...3-4 week window [for assessment]"
- "...Depending on how districts schedule testing, students lose not only classroom instructional time, but also fine arts instruction..."
- "Young students may not be used to technology."
- "Students don't have computer skills in [grades] 3-5 to navigate..."

Purposeful Testing: There is a need for clear and consistent messaging as to the meaning of tests and what they are used for. While it may encourage, "teaching to the test"-style instruction, some committee members assert that the assessment should be connected to graduation while others believe that using the assessment in this way is punitive to students. In addition, whether states choose to implement PARCC raises a question of the longevity of the assessment. Committee members commented:

- "PARCC causes unnecessary anxiety for students."
- "Tests feel high stakes to young students."
- "Is PARCC the best or only way to assess successful implementation of CCSS?"

Data Use & Analysis: Both PARCC and NECAP assessments raise concerns about whether data collected is necessary, valid, or useful. Committee members commented:

- "Parents can have children opt out of testing...not sure if accurate measurements are being realized."
- "NECAP results are not useful because [there is] no alignment with NGSS."
- "NECAP has validity concerns at the middle level."
- "PARCC-norms? Is it really giving us the needed data?"
- "PARCC results not useful as the method [in which it is] taken [sic] significant (Math) computer vs. paper."

Primary benefits of PARCC and NECAP may be leveraged for more effective implementation:

Potential for Robust Data: A greater use of data is possible given the scope of assessment implementation across states. In particular, viewing individual student progress in terms of growth is beneficial. Committee members commented:

- "Large national sample of students!"
- "PARCC is more accurate reflection of what kids know."
- "PARCC provides a snapshot of where students are and how we can make district-wide improvements."

Testing Administration: Committee members shared advantages of assessment administration and logistics:

- "Flexible dates of assessing..."
- "PARCC online supports – evidence tables, progressions, and curriculum preps – are helpful."