### Transitioning to a Future Assessment System[[1]](#footnote-1)

Recommendation

**Recommendation 10 – Explore the Possible Use of Matriculation Examinations**

Matriculation or qualification examinations are used in numerous countries to assess student acquisition of prerequisite knowledge and skills for entrance into college, career, and/or upper high school levels. The use of such examinations in the United States is rare, but the potential benefits of this type of examination to students, LEAs, colleges, and business alike suggests that consideration be given to the idea of introducing them in California. Matriculation examinations can provide students with evidence of their requisite skills for prospective colleges or employers; in turn, these exams could make assessment relevant to students in a way that few other past state exams have.

In California, the concept of matriculation examinations was most recently introduced during the 2011-12 legislative session by Assembly Member Bonilla in Assembly Bill (AB) 2001. AB 2001 called for California’s statewide assessment reauthorization legislation to include:

a) A plan to bring together elementary and secondary school policy leaders, the community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, private colleges and universities, and postsecondary career technical and vocational programs to develop criteria and create non-punitive pathways in which assessments taken by middle and high school students are aligned with college and career readiness and may be recognized as one of a number of multiple measures for entry into college, placement in college-level courses, and career training.

b) A plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality, non-punitive assessments that has tangible meaning to individual middle and high school students, including, but not limited to, recognition and rewards for demonstrating mastery of subject matter and progress toward mastery of subject matter.

**Consideration 2: Implementing and incorporating any common assessments aligned with the CCSS developed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative Consortium or other interstate collaborations in which the state participates.**

Key Work Group Recommendations:

The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include diagnostic assessments at all grade levels to be used as needed. Testing at different grade levels should be for different purposes and should employ different approaches. At the secondary level, the assessment system should be aligned with college and career readiness, address 21st century skills, and have meaning for students (e.g., end-of-course [EOC] exams), including those enrolled in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses.

The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include writing assessments that permit valid year-to-year comparisons and can inform graduation requirements and college and career readiness determinations.

**Consideration 4: Enabling the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement at a point in time and over time for groups and subgroups of pupils, and for individual pupils.**

Key Work Group Recommendations:

The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should provide valid and reliable results that can be used to inform a variety of decisions and expectations, including end-of-course expectations, graduation determinations, college admissions or placement, and career readiness.

**Consideration 12: Assessing a pupil’s understanding of and ability to use the technology necessary for success in the 21st century classroom and workplace.**

Key Work Group Recommendations:

The state should ensure that sufficient technology resources and opportunities are provided to schools, classrooms, and students in all LEAs.

The state should provide guidance and resources to ensure that the new technology supports learning and mastery of content and that all students acquire the information, media, and technology skills needed for success in the 21st century classroom and advancement to college and/or careers.

The state should determine which information, media, and technology skills should be assessed on state-level assessments and which ones should be assessed on local assessments. For example, ensuring that students have the skills to critically evaluate the credibility of all resources, including Web-based resources, should be a local responsibility.

Outcomes

What information about student achievement is most important that the statewide assessment system provide to you and why?

Parents indicated that to better prepare students for college or the workforce, it is important to receive information about their students’ performance on a more global scale (i.e., compared to other countries), especially in the core subjects, as well as information about their students’ readiness for college and careers.

The results could provide students and their parents with more detailed information, as described in the following suggested examples:

* Some indication of the courses and career choices to consider, given student strengths based on the test results.
* Writing is important across all curricula, including career, vocational, and technical education. Therefore, the assessments should include common rubrics that can be used for scoring writing in different subjects. (For example, a common persuasive writing rubric that could be used to score essays in history–social science or science.)
* Because of the CCSS’s target of preparing students for college and careers, the CAHSEE should be at the level of college and career readiness.

Additional Comments

An important aspect of the validity of certain assessments is the predictability of students’ future performance in higher education or careers. This aspect of validity should be considered and planned for in the design of the assessments from the outset. In addition, the purposes of the assessments need to be clearly stated along with validating the assessments for the purposes intended.

The business leaders support the Framework for 21st Century Learning, which is similar to *ConnectEd’s College and Career Readiness: What Do We Mean? A Proposed Framework*. Included in these frameworks are such topics as productive self-concept, self-knowledge, self-management, self-esteem, self-efficacy, goal setting, time management, study skills, taking initiative, self-direction, resourcefulness, and task completion. In addition to incorporating those topics, the statewide student assessment system needs to measure effective organizational social behaviors, such as leadership, flexibility, adaptability, ethics, and responsibility.

These measures do not show up in the current assessment system.

Most people think these measures are additive in nature and crowd or compete with academic content. However, the business leaders would argue that through project-based and team-based learning, students would learn the academic subjects in deeper, more meaningful ways and would develop career readiness skills at the same time.

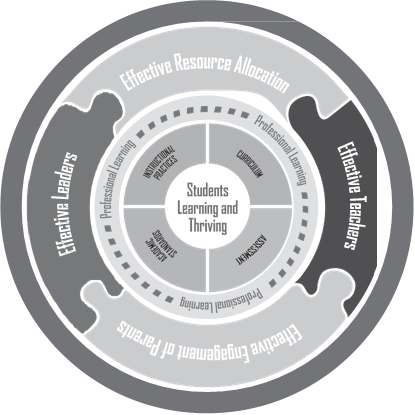
Scores That Can Be Used to Measure Year-to-Year Growth

and Multiple Year Growth

Respondents called for an indicator, one that could be used to judge individual student progress from one year to the next, to track individual student progress over time and provide some sense of whether the student is progressing at an adequate pace toward such targets as college and career readiness. The current system, it was noted, allows only for comparisons of cohorts within a grade level, and what is needed is a way to compare a student to him or herself in the previous year. It also was noted that comparing the current year to a previous year might not make sense for some students, such as secondary student who might be in two very different courses from one year to the next (e.g., Algebra I the previous year and Geometry this year). Comments from the administrators about growth went beyond individual students to the growth of schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) and the desire for comparisons to external markers such as the state, county, and other LEAs. Table D-2 displays the number and percent within each role (e.g., 27 percent of the teachers in kindergarten and grades one through eight [K–8] who provided comments) that mentioned growth scores in their responses to question 3.

Unless the assessment system is meaningful and incentive based for our high school students, including greater articulation with higher education and career technical programs we are wasting students’ time and millions of hours and test costs for very little. (Professional Organization).

Quality Schooling Framework Draft



1. Recommendations for Transitioning California to a Future Assessment System – A Report by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson to the Governor and the State Legislature – January 2013 http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/suptrecrpt2013.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)