Center for Assessment

Mississippi Student Testing Task Force

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Today's Presentation

- Today we will address three primary topics
  - Review of research related to testing time
  - Discuss considerations for using National tests in state systems
  - Provide guidance on formative/interim assessment systems

Testing Time

Evaluating ‘Testing Time’

Some Caveats:

- Which tests are included (school, district, state)?
- There are many differences across grades and among student groups (e.g. EL, SWD)
- Many argue that ‘assessment burden’ goes beyond administration time
    - Administrative tasks before and after administration (e.g. training, scheduling, set-up).
    - Scheduling disruptions

The Student and the Stopwatch

Study published by Teach Plus (Teoh et al, 2014)

https://teachplus.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdf/the_student_and_the_stopwatch.pdf

- Studied state and district required testing in 12 urban districts
- Findings reveal approximately 1.7% of school year spent on required testing, with significant variation among districts
- About 10 hours spent on ELA annually and 7 hours on mathematics

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

Study published by the Council of Great City Schools (Hart et al, 2015)

https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/Testing%20Report.pdf

- Studied state and district required testing in 66 districts
- Findings reveal approximately 2.34% of instructional time or 4.2 days spent in required testing in grade 8, which was the highest
- Districts reported roughly 20-25 hours per grade (grade 3-11) across content areas
  - State tests varied from about 7-9 hours depending on grade

State Assessments

- What do we know about state required assessments today?
  - ELA typically ranges from 3-5 hours for most states
  - Math typically ranges from 2-4 hours for most states
- Mississippi
  - ELA 4.3-4.8 hours
  - Math 3.2-4.1 hours
- PARCC
  - ELA approximately 3.75 - 4.5 hours
  - Math approximately 3.5 – 4.5 hours
- Smarter Balanced
  - ELA approximately 3.5 – 4 hours
  - Math approximately 2.5- 3.5 hours

State Assessments – Some Examples

- Alaska
  - ELA 3-4 hours
  - Math 3-4 hours
- Colorado
  - ELA 4.5 – 5.5 hours
  - Math 3.25 hours
- Florida
  - ELA 4.5 – 5 hours
  - Math 2.5 – 3 hours
- Georgia
  - ELA 3 -4.5 hours
  - Math 2-3 hours
- Ohio
  - ELA 3-3.5 hours
  - Math 2.5- 3 hours
- Massachusetts
  - ELA 4-5 hours
  - Math 2-4 hours
- South Carolina
  - ELA 3.5 hours
  - Math 2 hours
- Tennessee
  - ELA 3-4 hours
  - Math 1.5-2 hours

National Tests

ESSA Requirements

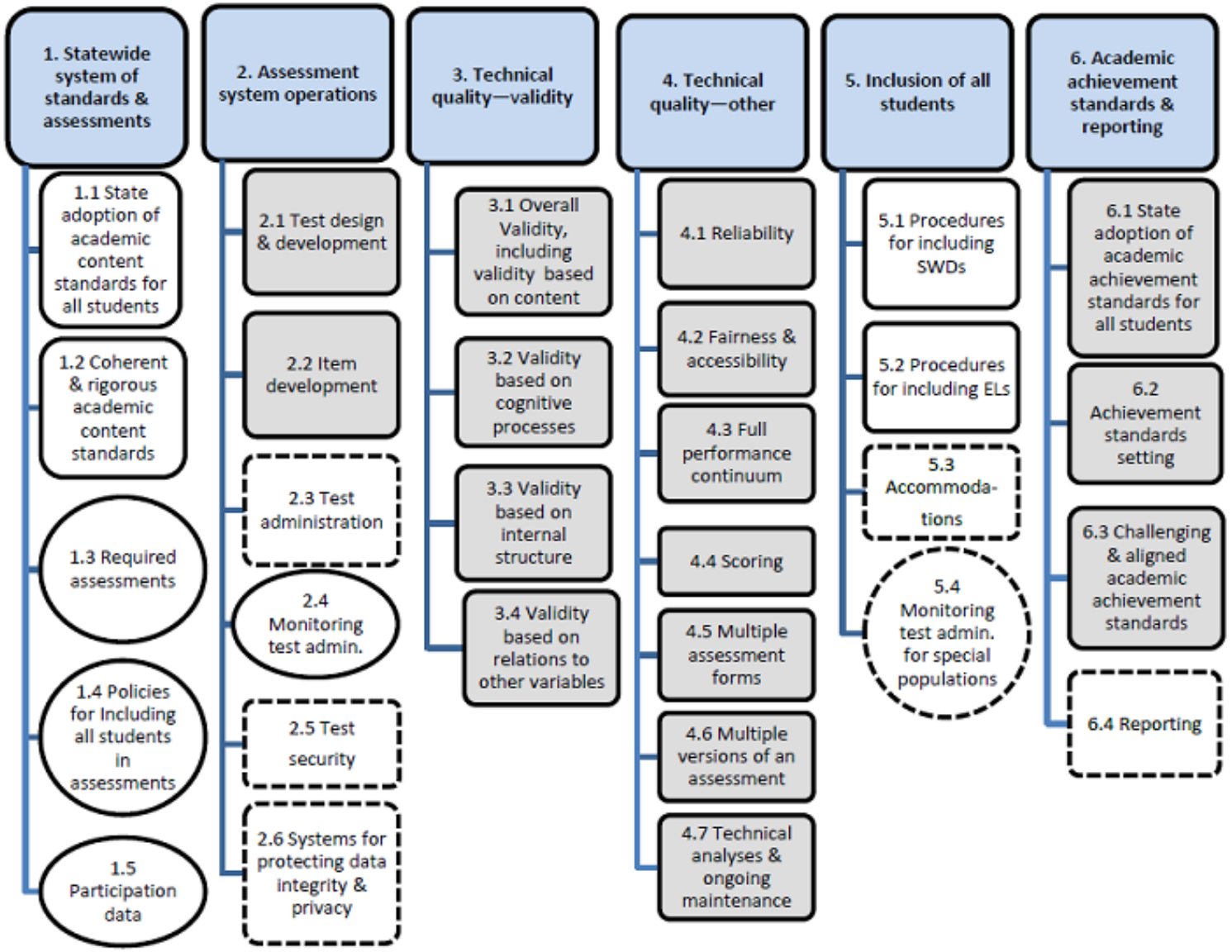
- States must test every year in grades 3-8 and once in high school in ELA and mathematics. States must also test science once in grades 3-6, 6-9, and high school.
- Assessment flexibility in ESSA:
  - Locally selected nationally-recognized high school assessment provision
  - Innovative assessment pilot provision
  - Multi-interim provision
- All tests approved for used under ESSA must be submitted by the state and comply with peer review criteria

States Using National Tests

- 25 states require the SAT or ACT
- 12 incorporate into accountability in some form
- We know of two states that submitted the ACT to the United States Department of Education for approval as their High School in compliance with ESSA
  - Wisconsin
  - Wyoming

Peer Review

- Peer review refers to the criteria for the technical quality of state assessment systems and the process for evaluating state submissions
- Some of the evidence is evaluated for compliance by ED staff. Other evidence is reviewed by peers who judge the extent to which the state's submission meets these requirements.



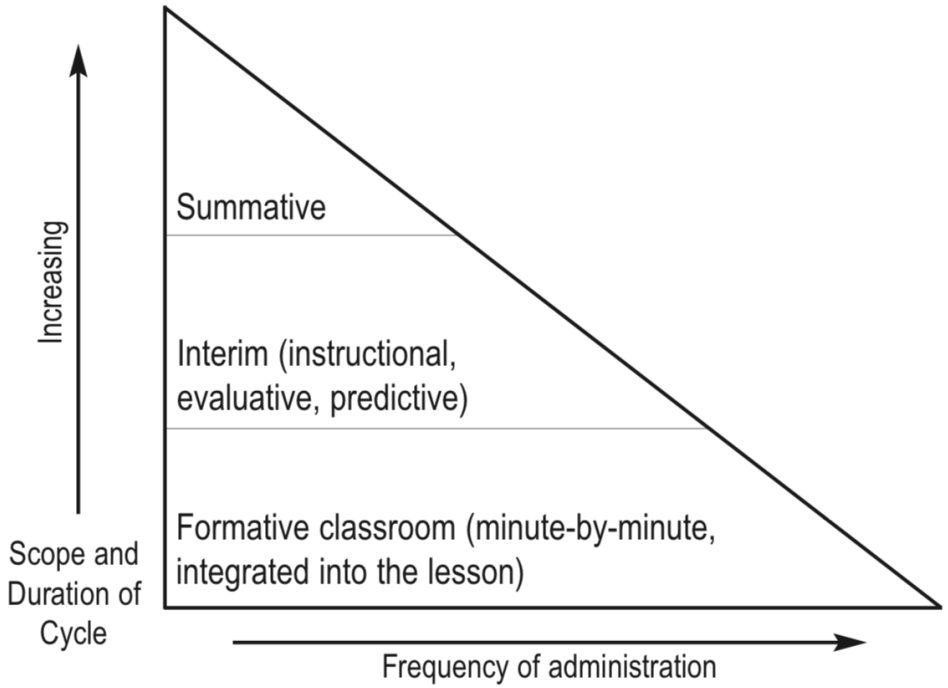
Considerations for approval and implementation

- Alignment to the full breadth and depth of Mississippi's state standards
- Inclusion of ELs and SWDs and appropriate accommodations and accessibility features
- Assessment along the full performance continuum
- Availability and comparability of administration mode
- Flexibility and access

Formative/ Interim Assessment Systems

Terminology

- **Summative:** generally given at the end of a unit typically as part of an accountability program or to inform policy.
- **Formative:** a process used by teachers and students during instruction to provide feedback. The purpose is to diagnose where students are in their learning and help educators improve learning.
- **Interim**: assessments that fall between formative and summative. Includes medium-scale, medium-cycle assessments to evaluate students knowledge and skills and inform decisions.



Perie, Marion, & Gong (2009). *Moving Toward a Comprehensive Assessment System: A Framework for Considering Interim Assessments.* Educational Measurement Issues and Practices.

Purposes of Assessment

- The key to designing any effective assessment system is to clearly define the purposes and uses. Potential uses might include:
  - Screening (Is the student prepared to benefit from this instruction?)
  - Measure 'along the way' learning (Did the student learn a specific skill or set of skills?)
  - Measure end of unit expectations (Did the student meet the learning goals for this unit?)
  - Prediction (Is the student likely to meet the learning goals for this unit?)
  - Growth (Did the student progress?)
  - Comparison (How did the student do compared to other students?)
- Consider, also, whether the claim is intended to be supported at the student level or an aggregate level (e.g. is the feedback for the student or to inform the effectiveness of a school/district initiative?)
- The design of the system should support the key goals – **form follows function.**

Balanced Systems of Assessment: Key Criteria

- **Coherence**: compatible with how a student is expected to progress in a domain
  - Vertical coherence
  - Horizontal coherence
- **Comprehensiveness:** fits the needs of multiple stakeholders
- **Continuity**: allows for monitoring and evaluating progress
- **Utility:** provide information necessary to support intended uses (follows theory of action)
- **Efficiency:** getting the most out of assessment resources, avoid redundant, superfluous design choices

From: Marion et al (2018) *A Tricky Balance: Challenges and Opportunities of Balanced Assessment Systems*. NCIEA: Dover, NH.

Design and Implementation Principles

- Lead with content: good assessments demonstrably measure what is valued
- Integration with curriculum is essential
- Feedback should be focused, clear, and useful
- Design decisions should be made at the system level, not the component level
  - Theory of action
- Focus on building capacity to assess, interpret, and use results effectively
- Monitor, evaluate, and refine