

## Building Professional Development to Support New Student Assessment Systems Executive Summary

The most powerful strategy school systems have at their disposal to improve teacher effectiveness is professional development. New assessment systems will provide teachers with significant new opportunities to guide all students toward college and career readiness. The success of these new assessment systems will rely on the ability of the educators charged with using them to improve instruction and support student learning. Professional development will be key to ensuring successful implementation.

Over the past few years, several large-scale studies have provided compelling evidence on the critical components of effective professional development. The research helps guide planning for professional development and should be considered if successful implementation of new assessments by all K-12 educators is the intended outcome. Key elements address collective responsibility, time and support, use of data, importance of collaboration, intensive classroom-based support, and access to external expertise.

Deep understanding and thoughtful planning and professional development support will be required by educators at all levels of the K-12 system if new assessment systems are to transform current instruction rather than merely supplement it. Professional development needs and issues are discussed and guiding questions provided so that substantive planning may begin. Issues range from the particular knowledge and skills that will be required of all teachers to adjustments the school systems must make to accommodate changes in classroom practice expected as a result of the new assessments.

To benefit from new assessment systems, states will need to be more thoughtful than they have been in the past about conceiving, organizing, managing, implementing, and evaluating effective professional development. Eight recommendations are offered to help rebuild professional development infrastructure:

Recommendations:

1. Adopt common standards for professional development
2. Create a new school year and daily school schedules that provide substantive time to support ongoing school-based professional development for implementation
3. Create a master implementation plan that stages professional development, new standards, and assessments
4. Establish teacher advisory committees
5. Leverage state requirements for Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP), School Improvement Plans, or both
6. Provide teachers appropriate resources.
7. Establish professional development academies
8. Adopt new licensure and relicensure requirements

While action will be required by individual states, most recommendations would benefit from discussion by the various consortia stakeholders for appropriateness and for sharing responsibilities associated with implementation.

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