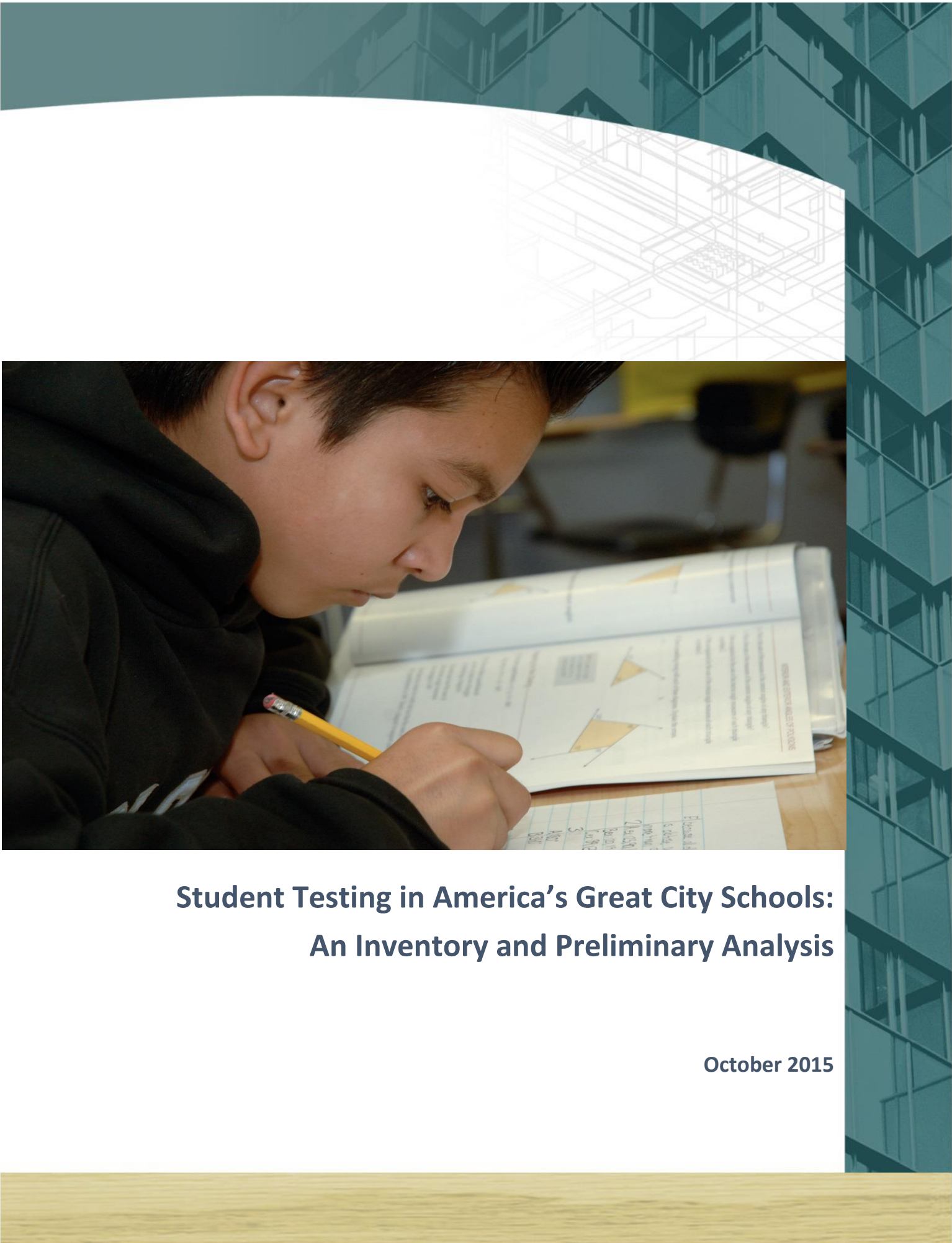




**Student Testing in America’s Great City Schools:
An Inventory and Preliminary Analysis**

October 2015

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

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By the
Council of the Great City Schools



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Preface

Testing in the nation's schools is among the most debated issues in public education today. Much of this discussion has centered on how much we are testing students and how we use test results to evaluate teachers, inform instructional practice, and hold schools and educators accountable. A recent national poll by Phi Delta Kappa¹ underscores the fact that the public at large is concerned about the extent of testing in schools, and these concerns are influencing how people think about the nationwide move to adopt and implement the new Common Core State Standards. The issue of testing has also emerged in debates in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate over the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have both spoken publicly on the issue and the need for reform.

Some of the testing debate has been well informed and thoughtful, and some of it has been self-serving and misleading. Either way, there has been little data collected on how much testing actually goes on in America's schools and how the results are used. This report aims to provide some dispassionate evidence on testing without aligning it with either the pro-testing or anti-testing factions.

In October 2013, the board of directors of the Council of the Great City Schools, which is composed of superintendents and school board members from the nation's largest urban public school systems, proposed a major inventory of testing practices in the Great City Schools. The board agreed to focus primarily on what assessments were being used, who mandated those assessments, what we were learning by administering those assessments, and why we were using them. While there are other important issues about testing that still need to be tackled, the board agreed that we should start with these topics and continue collecting data over the upcoming years to inform efforts to improve our assessment practices.

With extensive input from member districts, Council staff developed and launched a survey of assessment practices in the spring of 2014. This report presents the findings from that survey and subsequent Council analysis and review of the data. It also offers an initial set of observations about testing in our school systems and how it might be improved. The report does not answer all questions on this complex issue, but it should give a more complete and well-rounded picture of the amount and range of tests administered in the nation's urban school systems.

The Council and its members intend to continue work in this area in order to compare and improve our testing practices, over time building more strategic, rational systems for assessing progress and improving student achievement.

¹ Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup (2015). *PDK/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools: The 2015 PDK/Gallup Poll Report*. Bloomington, IN.

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Summary of Results

Based on the Council's survey of member districts, its analysis of district testing calendars, interviews, and its review and analysis of federal, state, and locally mandated assessments, this study found—

- ❖ In the 2014-15 school year, 401 unique tests were administered across subjects in the 66 Great City School systems.
- ❖ Students in the 66 districts were required to take an average of 112.3 tests between pre-K and grade 12. (This number does not include optional tests, diagnostic tests for students with disabilities or English learners, school-developed or required tests, or teacher designed or developed tests.)
- ❖ The average student in these districts will typically take about eight standardized tests per year, e.g., two NCLB tests (reading and math), and three formative exams in two subjects per year.
- ❖ In the 2014-15 school year, students in the 66 urban school districts sat for tests more than 6,570 times. Some of these tests are administered to fulfill federal requirements under No Child Left Behind, NCLB waivers, or Race to the Top (RTT), while many others originate at the state and local levels. Others were optional.
- ❖ Testing pursuant to NCLB in grades three through eight and once in high school in reading and mathematics is universal across all cities. Science testing is also universal according to the grade bands specified in NCLB.
- ❖ Testing in grades PK-2 is less prevalent than in other grades, but survey results indicate that testing in these grades is common as well. These tests are required more by districts than by states, and they vary considerably across districts even within the same state.
- ❖ Middle school students are more likely than elementary school students to take tests in science, writing, technology, and end-of-course (EOC) exams.
- ❖ The average amount of testing time devoted to mandated tests among eighth-grade students in the 2014-15 school year was approximately 4.22 days or 2.34 percent of school time. (Eighth grade was the grade in which testing time was the highest.) (This only counted time spent on tests that were required for all students in the eighth grade and does not include time to administer or prepare for testing, nor does it include sample, optional, and special-population testing.)
- ❖ Testing time in districts is determined as much by the number of times assessments are given during the school year as it is by the number of assessments.

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- ❖ There is no correlation between the amount of mandated testing time and the reading and math scores in grades four and eight on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- ❖ Test burden is particularly high at the high-school level, although much of this testing is optional or is done only for students enrolled in special courses or programs. In addition to high school graduation assessments and optional college-entry exams, high school students take a number of other assessments that are often mandated by the state or required through NCLB waivers or Race to the Top provisions. For instance—
 - In 71.2 percent of the 66 districts, students are required to take end-of-course (EOC) exams to fulfill NCLB requirements—sometimes in addition to their state-required summative test.
 - Approximately half of the districts (46.8 percent) reported that EOC exams factor into their state accountability measures.
 - In 47 percent of districts, students are required by their states to take career and technical education (CTE) exams if they are taking a CTE course or group of courses. This requirement can also be in addition to state summative exams and EOC tests.
 - About 40 percent (37.9 percent) of districts report that students—both elementary and secondary—are required to take exams in non-NCLB-tested grades and subjects. These are sometimes known as Student Learning Objective (SLOs) assessments or value-added measures.
- ❖ Urban school districts have more tests designed for diagnostic purposes than any other use, while having the fewest tests in place for purposes of international comparisons.
- ❖ The majority of city school districts administered either PARCC or SBAC during the past school year. Almost a quarter (22.7 percent) administered PARCC assessments and 25.8 percent administered SBAC assessments in spring 2015. Another 35 percent administered the same statewide assessments in reading and math as they did in 2013-2014 (e.g., Texas, Virginia). And 16.7 percent of districts administered a new state-developed college- and career-ready (CCR) assessment (e.g., Georgia, Florida). In other words, there were substantial variations in state assessments and results this past school year.
- ❖ Opt-out rates among the Great City Schools on which we have data were typically less than one percent, but there were noticeable exceptions.
- ❖ On top of state-required summative exams, EOCs, SLOs, graduation tests, and college-entry exams, many districts (59.1 percent) administered districtwide formative assessments during the school year. A number of districts (10.6 percent) administered formative

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assessments mandated by the state for some students in some grades and administered their own formative assessments for other students and grades. Almost half of the districts using formative assessments administered them three times during the school year.

- ❖ Some 39 percent of districts reported having to wait between two and four months before final state test results were available at the school level, thereby minimizing their utility for instructional purposes. In addition, most state tests are administered in the spring and results come back to the districts after the conclusion of the school year.
- ❖ The total costs of these assessments do not constitute a large share of an average urban school system's total budget.
- ❖ There is sometimes redundancy in the exams districts give. For example, multiple exams are sometimes given in the same subjects and grades to the same students because not all results yield data by item, grade, subject, student, or school—thereby prompting districts to give another exam in order to get data at the desired level of granularity.
- ❖ In a number of instances, districts use standardized assessments for purposes other than those for which they were designed. Some of these applications are state-recommended or state-required policies, and some originate locally.
- ❖ The findings suggest that some tests are not well aligned to each other, are not specifically aligned with college- or career-ready standards, and often do not assess student mastery of any specific content.
- ❖ According to a poll of urban public school parents administered by the Council of the Great City Schools in the fall of 2014, respondents had very mixed reactions towards testing. For instance, a majority (78 percent) of responding parents agreed or strongly agreed that “accountability for how well my child is educated is important, and it begins with accurate measurement of what he/she is learning in school.” Yet this support drops significantly when the word “test” appears.
- ❖ Parents respond more favorably to the need for improving tests than to references to more rigorous or harder tests. Wording about “harder” tests or “more rigorous” tests do not resonate well with parents. Parents support replacing current tests with “better” tests.
- ❖ Finally, survey results indicate that parents want to know how their own child is doing in school, and how testing will help ensure equal access to a high quality education. The sentence, “It is important to have an accurate measure of what my child knows.” is supported or strongly supported by 82 percent of public school parents in our polling. Language about “testing” is not.

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Introduction

The history of standardized testing in America's schools is long and checkered. Testing has been used to determine college entrance, suitability for employment, placement in the military, and eligibility to vote. It emerged in the nation's elementary and secondary schools almost as soon as public education was founded in the early 1800s. Still, it was not until the 1930s, when the need for student assessments merged with the first computerized test scanners to produce the first bubble tests, that standardized testing began to look like what it does now.

The original Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing (ACT) began to take their current forms around this time, and by the 1940s and 1950s they were almost universally accepted measures of academic attainment and college admissibility. Large-scale testing by states emerged in the 1970s with the rise of the basic skills and minimum competency movements, and the federal government started its own standardized testing in the 1970s and 1980s with the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP).

Along the way, standardized testing became the subject of widespread criticism as it was often used to restrict voting rights, immigration, jobs, and access to quality schooling. To be sure, it was a cost-effective mechanism for conducting large-scale and rapid appraisals of academic achievement in schools, but it was also used to bolster racial stereotypes about intelligence and track students into second-rate course work and limit educational and social opportunities.

The simple truth is that the nation has been marching down this road of ever-greater testing for some time. We have assumed that if we measure student attainment, it will improve. But we never assumed that, if we tested the same thing over and over again, achievement would improve even more.

The latest debates around testing are centered on questions about whether there is too much of it. Is too much testing conducted in our schools? Is testing taking time away from instruction or hijacking the focus and content of instruction? What are the results used for? Is it appropriate to use test scores to evaluate school staff and teachers? Much of this debate arose with the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act, but the discussion became inflamed nationally with the development of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and assessments that were developed to measure their attainment and to evaluate teachers.

Some of this debate has been thoughtful and well-reasoned; some has been baseless and ill-informed. The controversies have stoked the testing "opt-out" movement, fueled divisions among public educators and others, undermined the new state standards, and created substantial backlash over the use of the assessments.

Much of this backlash has been aimed at local school systems, but evidence in this report indicates that culpability for our assessment system also rests at the doorsteps of Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, the states, and test publishers and vendors.

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Given this context of emotionally charged controversy and incomplete information, this report aims to provide the public, along with teachers and leaders in the Great City Schools, with objective evidence about the extent of standardized testing in public schools and how these assessments are used.

Work on this project arose out of a lengthy discussion about testing at meeting of the Board of Directors of the Council of the Great City Schools in October 2013. At that time the board, which is composed of the superintendent and one school board member from each of the Council's member urban school system, agreed that the organization lacked comprehensive data on testing in its school systems.

The group was also interested in determining the origins of various assessments and requirements, gaining a better understanding of parental perspectives on testing, and drawing some broad lessons about the use of test results in urban school systems across the nation.

To address these needs, the board charged Council staff with conducting a major inventory of testing practices across member districts. The results of this inventory and analysis are presented in the following chapters. Of course, this is only a first step. Over time, we are committed to developing guidelines and recommendations that would help member districts and others create more coherent and strategic testing systems, including steps school districts could take to help parents and others better understand the purposes and outcomes of testing.

Methodology and Analysis

A. Methodology

Developing and Fielding the Assessment Survey

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What assessments do urban school districts administer?
2. What are the assessments used for?
3. How much time is devoted to taking these assessments?
4. Who requires these assessments?
5. What do parents think of testing?

To answer these questions, Council staff developed a comprehensive district survey in early 2014. (See Appendix D.) The survey was then reviewed by the organization's board of directors and was sent out to directors of research and assessment in each member district in the summer of 2014. These individuals were asked to coordinate responses with other district personnel and to provide information on the upcoming 2014-15 school year rather than the ongoing 2013-14 year. Changes in testing practices throughout the 2014-15 school year were tracked by staff members.²

Survey questions asked for information on both summative and formative assessments given at each grade, subjects tested, student groups tested, testing time, the origins of the tests, and uses of test data.

Data on required assessments for all students in a specified grade were collected on each of the following—

- State summative assessments used for school accountability purposes under *No Child Left Behind*, including PARCC, SBAC, and others
- Formative assessments in states and locales where they were required for all students in a specified grade
- End-of-course exams in locales where they were required for all students
- Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) or other exams that were required for all students in a given grade in otherwise non-tested grades and subjects
- Other mandatory exams that were administered to all students in a specified grade

In addition, the survey asked for information on other districtwide assessments that were administered to some or only a sample of students, i.e., not all students in a specified grade. These tests also included students who were tested according to the program in which they were enrolled.

² Because many states and school districts had not finalized their assessment plans for 2014-15 when the survey was initially administered, the Council's research team monitored and updated survey responses throughout the 2014-15 school year. To do so, the team kept track of state legislation, U.S. Department of Education guidelines, and updates to district testing calendars and websites. Also, the research team continuously interviewed district assessment staff.

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Also, the survey asked about assessments that were optional, particularly for the student. Of course, not every test fell neatly into one of these categories. A test that was required of all students in a particular grade in one district might be given to only a sample in another district. The Council's research team was careful to make sure that the administration and use of each exam was understood so it would be classified in the correct category. In addition, the team was careful not to double-count tests across categories.

These sample, specialized, and optional exams often included—

- Districtwide norm-referenced assessments—such as the ITBS, the Terranova, the NWEA, or others—when they were given on a sample basis (otherwise, when they were administered to all students in a particular grade, they were included in the mandatory category above.)
- Assessments that were used districtwide but were either optional or that were designed for students participating in particular programs or courses of study. Examples of optional tests included the SAT and ACT (when they were not required for all students in a grade), while tests associated with particular courses included exams such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) tests and Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruments.

Finally, we gathered assessment information on specific categories of students, including students with disabilities and English language learners.

For all these assessments, the Council asked for information about—

- Time required for students to take the tests
- How students participating in each test were identified and whether this constituted a sample or the full universe of students at a particular grade level
- Item types, e.g., multiple choice, short answer, extended response, performance task
- Overall testing budgets
- Who required or mandated the test
- Whether or not the results of each test were used for state or personnel accountability purposes
- What grades and subjects were tested
- Use of the tests to determine student grades
- Instructional purposes of the tests
- Amount of time required to get test results back to schools and teachers
- How often the tests were administered each year.

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By November 2014, 54 of the Council's 67 member districts had completed the survey. Council staff members then collected each district's testing calendars, reconciled survey responses with the calendars, and interviewed district personnel to ensure that data were comprehensive and consistently reported. In particular, the team looked at whether responses from districts in the same state were consistent. Initially, for example, districts in a state would attribute the origin of a test to the district itself or to the state, while another district in the same state might attribute the same test to the federal government. Sorting out these responses took considerable time and care.

During this time, the research team began to monitor the 54 districts for changes in assessment plans and practices. Most state and district testing calendars changed during the course of the 2014-15 school year, and some were revised as late as March and April 2015. The Council also used district testing calendars, district and state websites, and interviews to gather data on the 12 districts that had not responded to the original survey.³

While the Council asked about which student assessments were used for personnel evaluation purposes, we did not collect data on tools such as the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) that are used to evaluate principals but are not administered to students. In addition, we did not examine technology-based platforms, such as those developed by Teachscape, that are sometimes used to hold data on teacher evaluations and professional development. And we did not examine instruments or surveys that students sometimes complete to assess their perceptions of their teachers, such as those developed by the Tripod Project.

In other words, there is considerable information in this report, but it may not have captured some specialty tests, it does not answer every question, and it doesn't necessarily offer complete answers to every question it does tackle. Still, we hope the results are useful.

Additional Data Collection

To supplement the survey data, the research team conducted a comprehensive review of all federal, state, and local mandates for each assessment. This review produced state-by-state timelines on assessments resulting from the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top fund (RTT) announcements and awards, changes in state laws on assessments and teacher evaluations connected to those federal programs, and changes to assessments and state accountability systems included in state waivers. Given the intense debate surrounding this topic, the review was conducted to clarify *who* was requiring particular assessments. For example, several districts reported that assessments for English language learners or student learning objectives (SLOs) were state mandated. Our review often corrected this attribution. More will be said about this later in the report.

³ New Orleans was not surveyed because of the unique circumstances of the district. In addition, Arlington (TX) and San Antonio were not included because they joined the Council after the survey was administered.

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In addition, the Council gathered data on the number and percentage of students who opted out of mandatory testing in the spring of 2015 and conducted a poll of parents of students attending the Great City Schools about their perceptions of testing.

Finally, Council research staff conducted interviews with teachers, principals, and staff in eight Chicago schools to get their building-level perspectives on the testing they administered.

B. Analysis

Organizing and Presenting the Data

The complexity in answering questions about amounts of testing and time devoted to it arises from such issues as whether tests are required or optional and whether the tests are required of all students or just some. Even among required tests, no student ever takes all of them. For example, some districts require all tenth graders to take an EOC test, but they may not require all tenth graders to take other summative exams. Or some districts will require third grade students to take a reading or math test that they will not require of second graders. Another district may require all students to take interim or benchmark assessments but may not require all students to take SLOs.

In addition, some tests are required but are given only to a sample of students. For example, some students may be randomly selected to participate in national or international assessments, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), but large numbers of other students will not participate. In other cases, students take tests by their own choice or because of the wishes of their parents. Sometimes students choose to take the ACT as they apply to college, while in other cases the ACT may be required of all students in a particular grade. In other words, a test that falls into one category in one district may fall into another category in a neighboring school district.

Finally, the assessment of English language learners, students with disabilities, and ELLs with disabilities is conducted according to federal law and current state testing requirements. For students with disabilities, this testing is typically conducted using either general assessments with or without accommodations (including additional time) or alternate assessments based on grade-level or alternate standards. In addition, ELLs will take English language proficiency tests, and students suspected of having a disability will be given a battery of diagnostic assessments to determine the exact nature of the disability.

Throughout this report, we frequently refer to these three categories and differences because it became clear early in the data collection and analysis process that results could be misleading if all tests administered by school systems were treated the same, i.e., as if everyone took them. Specifically, we categorized assessments on which we had data as either mandatory (i.e., tests that were required for all students in a particular grade) or not mandatory (i.e., tests that were administered to a sample of students, were optional, or were given only to students participating in particular programs). We then created another category of tests that were only given to certain

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groups of students (i.e., tests that were given only to pre-school pupils, students with disabilities, or English language learners). Finally, we subdivided the mandatory assessments given to all students in a designated grade into the following categories:

1. *Statewide tests.* These are tests that are typically administered in grades three through eight and once in high school pursuant to NCLB. These assessments are grouped into one of four subcategories: (1) the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), (2) the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), (3) state-developed assessments based on previous standards (2013-14), and (4) new state-developed assessments to measure college- and career-ready standards in 2014-15.

The reader should note that we treat tests in individual subjects in this category as unique assessments. For instance, science may be mandated for all fifth graders but will not be required for fourth graders. Math may be mandated for all ninth graders but reading may not be. Consequently, math and reading tests in third grade are considered to be two assessments even if they both carry the same name.

2. *End-of-course (EOC) assessments.* These are mandatory tests given at the conclusion of a particular course of study usually in middle and/or high school grades, and typically involve tests in such core courses as English language arts, math, science, and/or social studies. The EOC assessments are often used to fulfill course requirements and/or student graduation requirements, but some states also use them to satisfy federal NCLB, state, district, or school accountability requirements. EOC exams in each subject are treated as separate tests in this report. These exams are given by course, not by grade, but this report associates courses with a particular grade. For example, Algebra 1 is associated with grade nine.
3. *Formative assessments.* These assessments are often mandatory—but not always—and include short-term tests developed by the PARCC/SBAC consortia, states, school districts, commercial publishers, and the like. They are administered to students periodically throughout the school year to assess content mastery at various points in the school year. The assessments are often given every three to six weeks and may be either cumulative in nature or discrete, covering one, two, or three instructional units per subject area. They are generally distinguished from benchmark or interim tests by their emphasis on content that has been most recently taught. Formative exams in each subject are treated as separate tests in this report.
4. *Student Learning Objectives (SLO).* SLOs are typically mandatory and are designed to assess student growth and gauge teacher effectiveness in otherwise untested grades and subjects (e.g., health, physical education, music, art, zoology). SLOs are commonly pre- and post-assessments used to determine student academic improvement over a designated

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period and set annual teacher expectations. SLOs in each subject are treated as separate tests in this report, but pre- and post-tests are counted as a single test.

5. *Other mandated state or district assessments.* These were assessments that may be mandated for an entire grade level but are not included in one of the other categories.
 - a. *Mandated college-readiness assessments.* These included but were not limited to assessments designed to predict college readiness, such as the ACT, SAT, PSAT, ACT Plan, ACT Explore or ACT Aspire assessments, and were only counted when they are required for all students in a particular grade. (Otherwise, we consider these tests to be optional.) These assessments sometimes serve multiple purposes, such as satisfying high school graduation requirements or assessing eligibility for National Merit Scholarships, etc.
 - b. *Interim or benchmark assessments.* These assessments are defined as those given two or three times during the school year to measure student progress. The assessments are commonly administered once in the fall, winter, and spring. Sometimes these assessments are computer adaptive, or they are used as screening devices for students. In addition, these assessments are often subject-specific, and districts have the option of purchasing or requiring various subjects independently. For instance, a district might require reading but not math. Examples include but are not limited to such tests as: the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP), Scholastic Reading/Math Inventory (SRI/SMI), Renaissance Learning's STAR Reading/STAR Math, the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), etc. These assessments differ from formative assessments in that they generally do not assess the mastery of content. They are typically designed to measure changes in a student's overall skills.
 - c. *Nationally normed-referenced assessments.* These assessments are standardized measures that are typically developed commercially and are designed to determine how students taking the tests compare with a national norm group. They are sometimes used as screeners for gifted and talented programs and other purposes. Examples include the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), and the Terranova test. For this report, these assessments were treated as one test despite the fact that they may include verbal and non-verbal sections or math and reading sections—but they are given at the same time as part of one instrument. In this report, we assume the complete battery of assessments were always administered, so we count them as one test and calculate testing time based on the full assessment.

Interpreting the Data

In putting together this report and analyzing the survey data, the Council made every effort to account for the varying nuances and complexities in how one categorizes and defines testing in the nation's major urban school systems. For example, schools in some districts are given options for what assessments might satisfy state or district requirements. In one district, for instance, the lowest-performing schools were instructed to use one particular interim or benchmark assessment, while other schools in the same district were given the option of using any of three different assessments to meet the same requirement. Although all three assessments were reported on the district's survey as mandated or required, the Council treated all three as one assessment because an individual student would only take one of the three, not all three in the same academic year.

In addition, average testing time and the total number of tests across Council member districts is shaped by the states in which the districts are located. In other words, districts in the same state tend to have similar numbers of tests and comparable testing time. This means that counts of tests and testing time can be affected by the number of districts in any state. For example, the Council has five districts in Ohio, so the amount of total testing time is influenced by the fact that PARCC testing is counted five times. We count each district as an independent unit.

Moreover, tests that are purchased, acquired, developed, or used at the individual school level—including those by individual teachers—are not counted in the statistics we present in this report. There are a large number of these tests below the federal, state, and district levels, but there is no way to know how many or how extensively they are used without doing a survey of individual schools. At some point, this kind of analysis should be done.

Also, we have not attempted to quantify the amount of time that is devoted either to giving or administering the tests or to preparing for them (i.e., test prep). Test administration can be particularly time-consuming when the tests are given to one student at a time. These activities can be time-consuming, but we could not gauge how much existed in this study. Again, this should be the subject of future studies.

The reader should keep all of these and other nuances in mind as you review the data presented in this report. In addition, the reader should remember the following rules that the Council's research team applied to the data:

1. The total number of test names across the 66 urban school districts, i.e., 401 tests, is determined by counting unique assessments or assessment names as follows: (a) We count each mandated state test in reading and math as two tests—and we count mandated tests of the same name, like PARCC or SBAC, once in reading and once in math—no matter how many districts administered the assessment; (b) we count each End-of-Course (EOC) exam as a separate test for each subject in which it is given; (c) we count formative exams, regardless of whether they were developed by the state or district, according to the number

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of subjects in which the exams are given—not the number of times they are given, so a formative exam in math that is given three times a year is counted as one exam; (d) we count all Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) by subject regardless of the number of times it is given, so pre- and post-tests are counted once; (e) we count other mandated assessments once; (f) we count sample tests, optional tests, and program-specific tests by the subjects in which they are given, except for those instruments—like SAT-10—where subjects are part of a single test; and (g) we count pre-K tests by subject where they exist, and we count English language proficiency tests by test name—not domain (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, writing). We do not count alternate special education tests separately, and we do not count special education diagnostic tests.

2. Each subject, grade level, and test administration was considered an assessment when we calculated the total number of times that students in the 66 districts sat for an exam. This is the basis for determining that students sit for testing 6,570 times. For example, all second grade students in one district may take an interim assessment in reading and mathematics during the fall, winter, and spring. This would count as six mandated assessments for these second graders during the school year.
3. If these same second-grade students were also required to take the ITBS assessment to screen for eligibility for gifted programming in addition to the previous six interim assessments they took, then the total number of mandated assessments would be seven. (In this case, ITBS is considered one test even though it might contain questions on multiple subjects.) However, if a student only takes the ITBS when his or her teacher recommends it, then the ITBS would be considered as a sample assessment, and the total number of mandated assessments for these students would remain at six for the school year.
4. In the same vein, a student sitting for four different sections of the same subject—for example, students who are taking the four-part PARCC math test—would be counted as taking one math test, even though it was given in four parts, possibly over four days. We calculated total testing time in this case as the total time required to take all four sections.
5. The survey asks for testing time in ranges of minutes. To calculate total testing time, the research team used the high end of the range (e.g., 90 minutes for the category 61-90 minutes), rather than the midpoint, to ensure that testing time was not underestimated. Where we had exact testing times for an assessment, we used those.
6. In calculating test time, we did not assume that students would be taking all tests in all subjects for some assessments. For instance, there are 34 AP exams, but we did not assume that any student would be taking all of them. Instead, we calculated testing time for AP as the amount of time required for the average AP-test taker to take two AP exams. Likewise, there are many subjects in which SLOs are administered, but we do not assume that

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students take all of them. We cap the number of SLOs that an average student is likely to take at ten to correspond to the number of assessments that students are likely to take.

7. The term “mandated for all students” refers to all students at an individual grade level who are required to take a particular test. The findings are divided into those assessments that all students are expected to take at an individual grade level (e.g., state NCLB assessments) and those assessments that only a sample of students or some students at a grade level are expected to take (e.g., NAEP). The Council recognizes that not every student in a grade may actually take the required test despite the expectation or mandate (i.e., special needs students or English language learners exempt from certain assessments). Consequently, results will represent students in general but not every individual student.
8. Finally, the overall average testing time and the number of assessments presented in this report are based on all 66 districts comprising the Great City Schools in the 2014-15 school year. However, testing time and other averages presented in some sections (e.g., SLOs or EOCs) are based only on the districts reporting that they administered those respective assessments—and not all do. Consequently, the number of districts will change in each section.

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Findings

In the 2014-15 school year, 401 unique tests were administered across subjects in the 66 Great City School systems.⁴ Students in these school districts sat for tests about 6,570 times over the course of the school year. This section divides these tests into three major categories: (I) assessments that are required of all students in a designated grade; (II) tests that are administered only to a sample of students, are given only when a student is enrolled in a particular program, or are optional; and (III) tests administered to special populations. There is a final section discussing parents and a section presenting examples from actual districts to illustrate the data.

I. Assessments Required of All Students in a Given Grade

Tests in this section include only those assessments that are required by the federal government, states, or local school systems and are administered to all students in the grade that is required to take the exam. The section does not include tests that are required by any of those entities but are given only to some students or a sample of students. The data also do not include time devoted to administering the tests or preparing students or teachers for the tests. Test administration can be particularly time-consuming when the tests are given to one student at a time—something this study did not take into account.

One additional cautionary note: Even when all students in a grade are required to take a test, there can sometimes be exceptions or exclusions. For instance, Chicago mandated the NWEA-MAP last school year as the basis for its accountability system, but it excluded all English language learners (ELLs) from that system when they scored below 3.0 on the English language proficiency test, ACCESS.

Figure 1 presents the average number of standardized tests that a student would be required to take between pre-K and grade 12 across the urban districts on which we have data. Results show that the average student in these 66 districts would be required to take some 112 tests between pre-K and grade 12.

This means that students, on average, will be required to take roughly eight standardized tests per year. If a student took the state summative test in reading and math in addition to a state-or district-required interim test three times a school year in both reading and math, then that student would

⁴ Data were collected on the testing portfolios of the public school districts in Albuquerque, Anchorage, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, Birmingham, Boston, Bridgeport, Broward County (FL), Buffalo, Charleston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, District of Columbia, Duval County (FL), East Baton Rouge, El Paso, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County (NC), Honolulu, Hillsborough County (FL), Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County, Kansas City (MO), Long Beach, Los Angeles, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange County (FL), Palm Beach County (FL), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland (OR), Providence, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Ana, Seattle, Shelby County (TN), St. Louis, St. Paul, Toledo, and Wichita. No data were collected on New Orleans.

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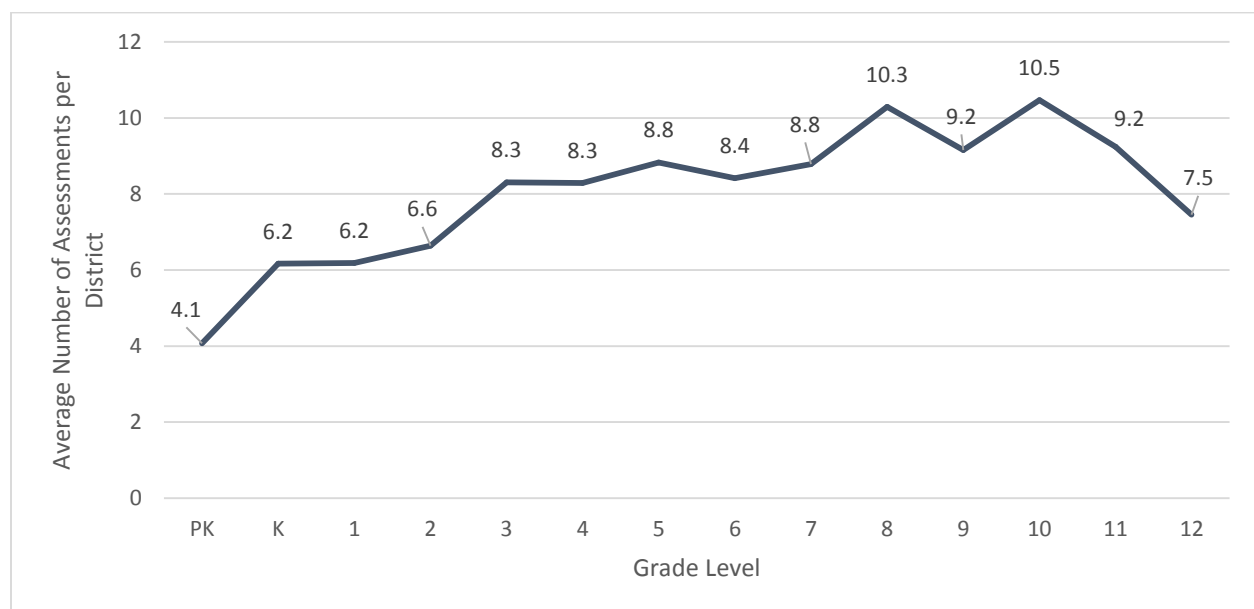
have taken the average number of assessments for the year. The largest numbers of tests are required in grades eight and ten; and smallest number of tests are required in pre-K, kindergarten, and grade one. In general, the number of required tests is highest in the secondary grades and lowest in the early elementary grades.

The findings are clear: a considerable number of tests are being administered in big-city public school districts—and probably in other school districts as well (although we have little data by which to compare the numbers of tests in suburban, rural, or small-town school systems—other than that associated with state-required testing of all districts in a state). Some of the tests that are counted here are administered to fulfill requirements under NCLB, Race-to-the-Top, or NCLB waivers, or they originate at state or local levels. But tests in this category are required for all students in a given grade. For a fuller discussion of the roles of Congress and the U.S. Department of Education in testing, see Appendix A.

In addition, the data are clear that testing in grades three through five is universal across all cities. Testing in pre-K to grade two is less prevalent, but survey results indicate that testing at these grade levels is still common. Tests in these earlier grades are typically selected at the district level, and they vary in type across districts within the same state.

The survey findings also indicate that assessments in grade eight may be much more prevalent than tests in earlier grades since students in this grade may be tested as a result of both NCLB requirements and various science, writing, technology, end-of-course (EOC), high-school placement, and other required exams. Students in grade 12, on the other hand, are more likely to be taking tests that are optional.

Figure 1. Average Number of Total Assessments per District Mandated for All Children by Grade Level



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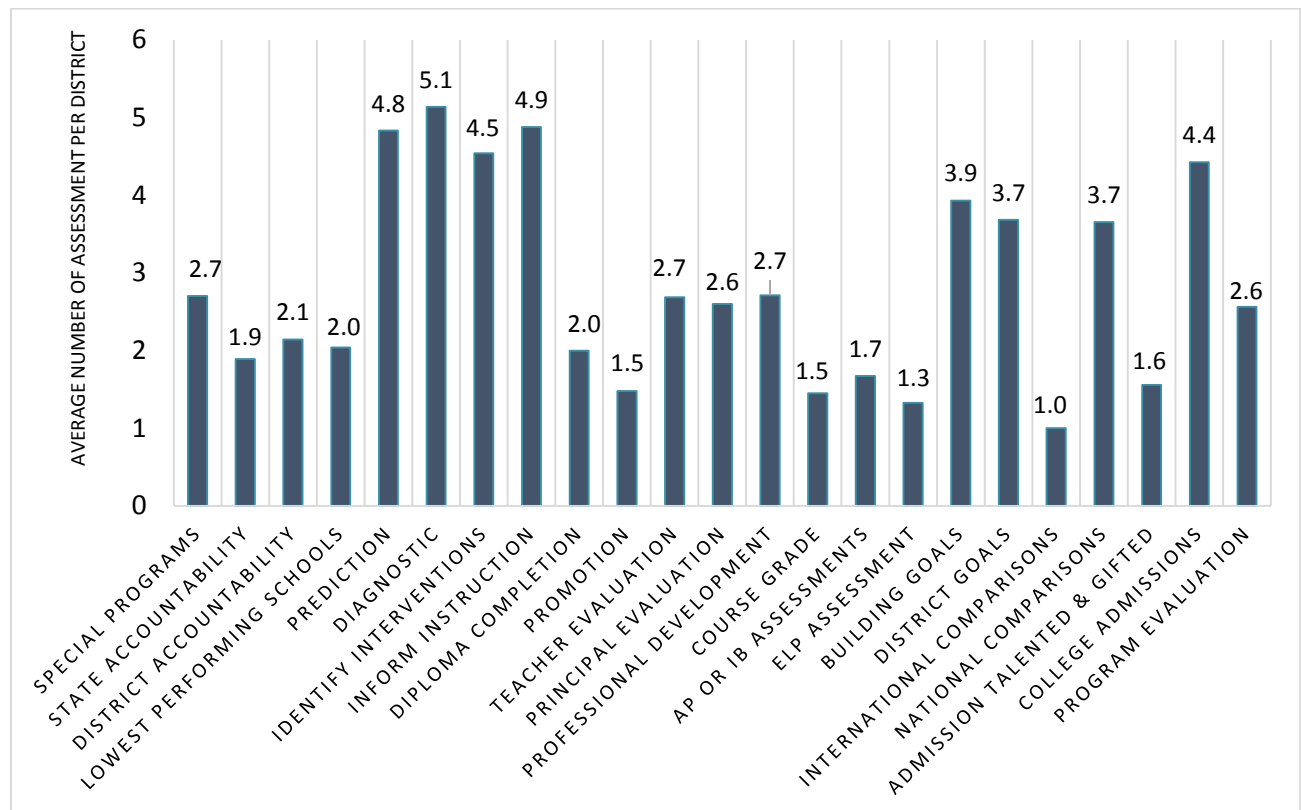
Figure 2 shows the average number of assessments that are required for all students across grades by type of use. In general, districts have more mandated tests that are used for the purposes of diagnostics, informing instruction, prediction, and to identify the need for instructional interventions than for other purposes.

In contrast, districts use fewer required tests for identifying students for gifted and talented programs, making international comparisons, determining English language proficiency, measuring Advanced Placement or IB attainment, setting course grades, or deciding grade promotions. In addition, districts reported having between two and three required tests they use for teacher and principal evaluations.

We should be clear that the number of required tests used for a particular purpose does not necessarily indicate that that purpose has a higher or lower priority—or that the state or district is using the test appropriately. There were a number of instances where districts used standardized assessments for purposes other than what they were designed for.

The number of tests used for a particular purpose may simply reflect the number of available tests. For instance, districts report having an average of only 1.33 tests to assess English language proficiency (ELP). This may be due to the fact that there are not a large number of standardized tests on the market that could be required for this purpose or that they are simply using the one test that the state requires according to federal law.

Figure 2. Average Number of Assessments Mandated for All Children by Type of Use



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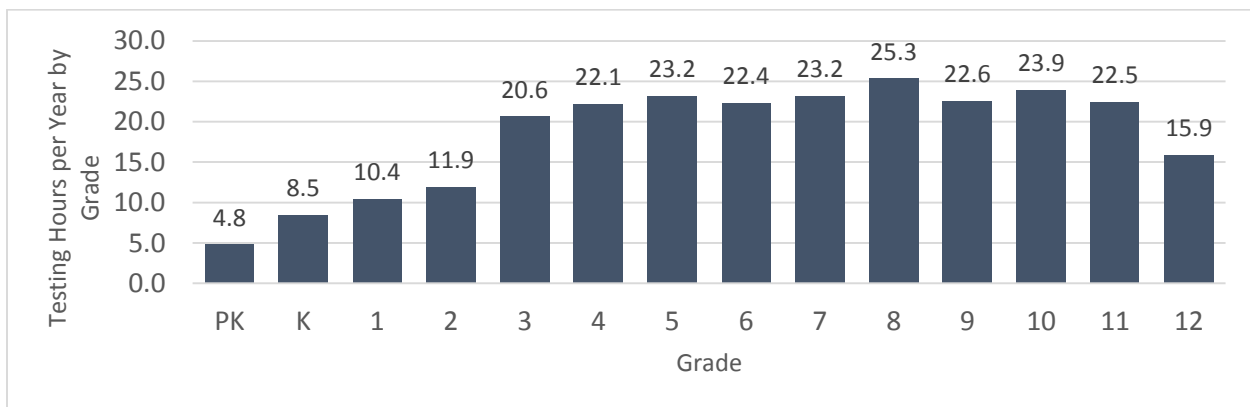
Moreover, districts may have tests for particularly purposes, but it doesn't necessarily mean that school staff or teachers use the results in the way that districts think. A study conducted by the Council and the American Institutes for Research (2012) found that use of test data can be positively correlated with improved test scores, but that the data were not always used. In general, we found that data generated from testing was not always extensively used.

Figure 3 presents data on the average amount of testing time in hours that is devoted to all mandated tests at each grade level. The amount of testing time accelerates significantly in grade three, consistent with requirements under NCLB, and remains high through grade 11. In general, students will devote between 20 and about 25 hours a year to taking mandated standardized tests. This number of hours constitutes about 2.34 percent⁵ of total instructional time for the average eighth grader (not counting sample, special, or optional assessments).

Again, these figures do not include time for tests that are given to a sample of students or that are optional. They also do not include tests that are designed for special populations or tests that were designed or acquired at the school level by principals or individual teachers. Finally, the testing times do not reflect the amount of time devoted to getting teachers and/or students prepared (i.e., test prep) for the exams.

We should also note that many of these required exams will be administered in a two- to three-month period in the second semester of the school year and will overlap with optional tests, various sample tests, some special population tests, and some school-based tests. For example, there were a number of cases in 2014-15 where PARCC and NAEP (a sample test) were being administered at the same time to the same students. This means that the time devoted to testing in the second half of the school year will be much higher than the percentage across the entire school year would suggest.

Figure 3. Average Testing Time in Hours Per Year for All Mandated Assessments for the Population of Students at Each Grade Level



⁵ This number is calculated by taking the total testing hours in eighth grade (i.e., 25.3 hours) and dividing it by a six-hour school day. The result (i.e., 4.22 days) is divided by a 180 day school year.

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Finally, the amount of time that is devoted to testing depends in part on the types of items on the tests themselves. For that reason, the reader will find data on item types in the subsequent sections. For example, some tests include only multiple-choice items, which require less time to administer; some tests make extensive use of extended-response questions or long-form writing tasks, which require more time. The mix of item types on standardized tests continues to undergo substantial changes from year to year as educators attempt to gauge what students grasp and what they do not. In addition, the increasing call for student performance measures, multiple measures, and portfolios of measures affects testing time and the number of tests that are administered.

A. Specific Categories of Mandated Assessments

We now look at these mandated tests according to the subcategories described in the methodology section, i.e., state summative tests, end-of-course exams, formative assessments, student learning objectives, and other mandated tests. (See Appendix B.)

1) State Tests Administered in Grades Three through Eight and Once in High School Pursuant to NCLB

All 66 of the urban school districts (100 percent) surveyed administer summative state exams as a result of requirements approved by Congress in the 2001-02 reauthorization of ESEA known as NCLB. (See Appendix A.) The federal law mandates that all states assess students annually in reading and mathematics in grades three through eight and once in high school. The law also required states to administer a science test at least once in grade bands three through five, six through eight, and once in high school. These tests are commonly used for federal, state, district, and school accountability purposes.

In addition, many states and districts use these assessments as a factor in annual teacher and/or principal evaluation systems; to identify school or district priority status; compute district, school, and/or teacher value-added measures; or make student promotional decisions at certain grade levels.

Neither Congress nor the U.S. Department of Education mandates which test will be given by each state or school district. Instead, the state determines which instrument it will give to meet the NCLB requirements. The U.S. Department of Education did, however, fund the development of new PARCC and SBAC tests to assess student attainment on the common core standards but did not require that they be used.

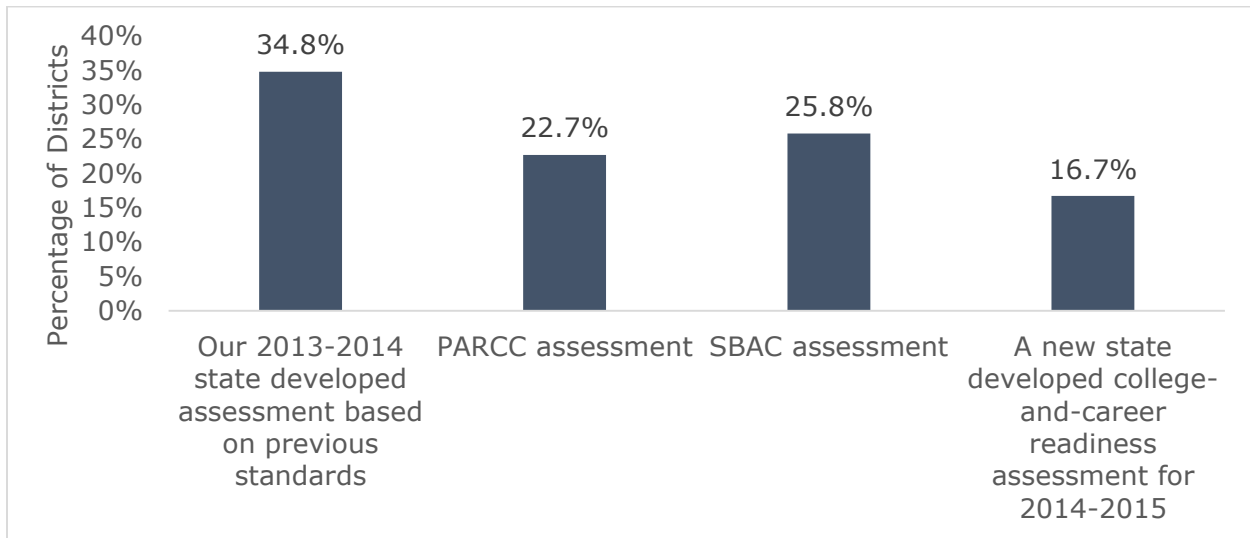
Results of the Council's survey indicate that most major city school districts administered either PARCC or SBAC as part of their NCLB requirement during the 2014-15 school year. Nearly a quarter (22.7 percent) of Council districts administered PARCC assessments and 25.8 percent administered SBAC assessments in the spring of 2015. Another 34.8 percent administered the same statewide assessment they had administered in the 2013-14 academic year (e.g., Texas and Virginia). And the remaining 16.7 percent of districts administered a new state-developed or

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purchased college- and career-ready (CCR) assessment in the 2014-15 school year (e.g., Georgia and Florida).

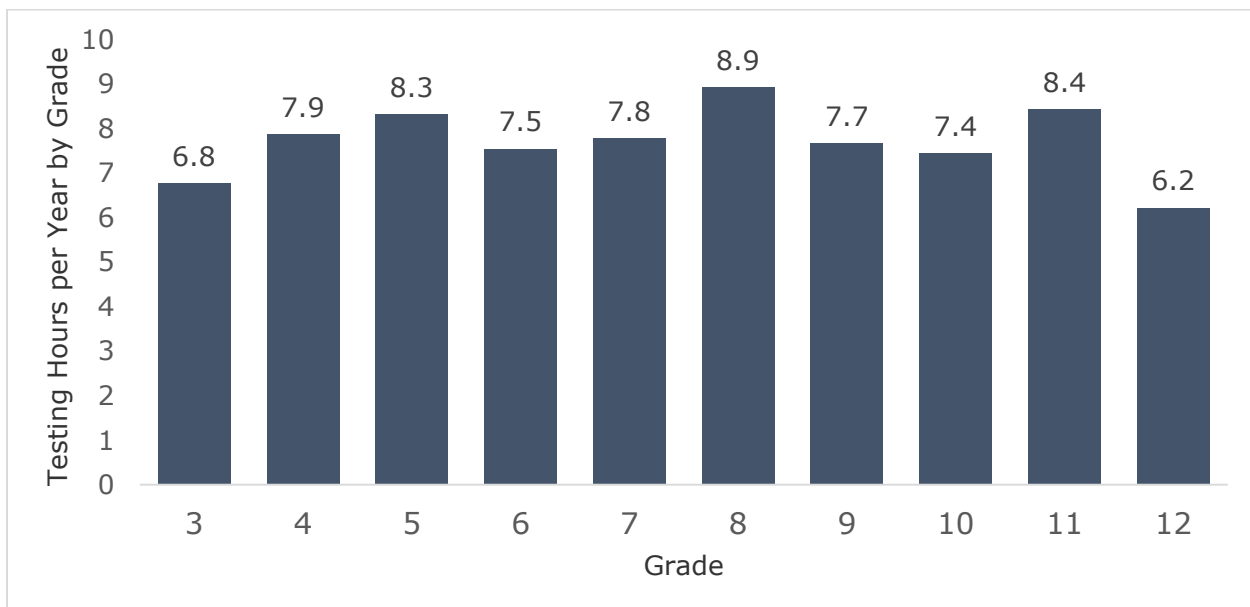
In other words, there was substantial variation in which state assessments were administered this past school year in the 66 urban school districts that are the focus of this study. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4. State Tests Administered in Grades 3-8 and in High School in the 2014-15 Academic School Year Pursuant to NCLB



The Council also determined the amount of time that was devoted to these NCLB-required exams in each grade in the 2014-15 school year. The results are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Average Testing Time in Hours per Year for All PARCC/SBAC/Other State NCLB Assessments at Each Grade Level



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The data indicate that students in the major urban school districts spent between 6.2 hours and 8.9 hours taking these assessments during the last school year, depending on their grade. In other words, about a third of the time students were taking required exams, it was due to NCLB.

Testing time specifically for SBAC and PARCC is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Estimated Testing Times for SBAC and PARCC

Estimated testing times for SBAC						
Subject	Grades	CAT	Performance Task Only	Total	Class Activity	Total
English Language Arts	3-5	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00
	6-8	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00
	11	2:00	2:00	4:00	:30	4:30
Mathematics	3-5	1:30	1:00	2:30	:30	3:00
	6-8	2:00	1:00	3:00	:30	3:30
	11	2:00	1:30	3:30	:30	4:00
Combined	3-5	3:00	3:00	6:00	1:00	7:00
	6-8	3:30	3:00	6:30	1:00	7:30
	11	4:00	3:30	7:30	1:00	8:30

Note: CAT is computer- adapted test.

Estimated testing times for PARCC							
Subject	Grades	PBA Unit 1 (LA)	PBA Unit 2 (RS)	PBA Unit 3 (NW)	EOY Unit 1	EOY Unit 2	Total
English Language Arts	3	1:15	1:15	1:00	1:15		4:45
	4-5	1:15	1:30	1:00	1:15		5:00
	6-11	1:15	1:30	1:00	1:00	1:00	5:45
		PBA Unit 1	PBA Unit 2		EOY Unit 1	EOY Unit 2	
Mathematics	3	1:15	1:15		1:15	1:15	5:00
	4-5	1:20	1:10		1:15	1:15	5:00
	6-8	1:20	1:10		1:20	1:15	5:05
	Algebra I, Geometry	1:30	1:15		1:20	1:15	5:20
	Algebra II	1:30	1:15		1:30	1:15	5:30
Combined	3	2:30	2:30	1:00	2:30	1:15	9:45
	4-5	2:35	2:40	1:00	2:30	1:15	10:00
	6-8	2:35	2:40	1:00	2:20	2:15	10:50

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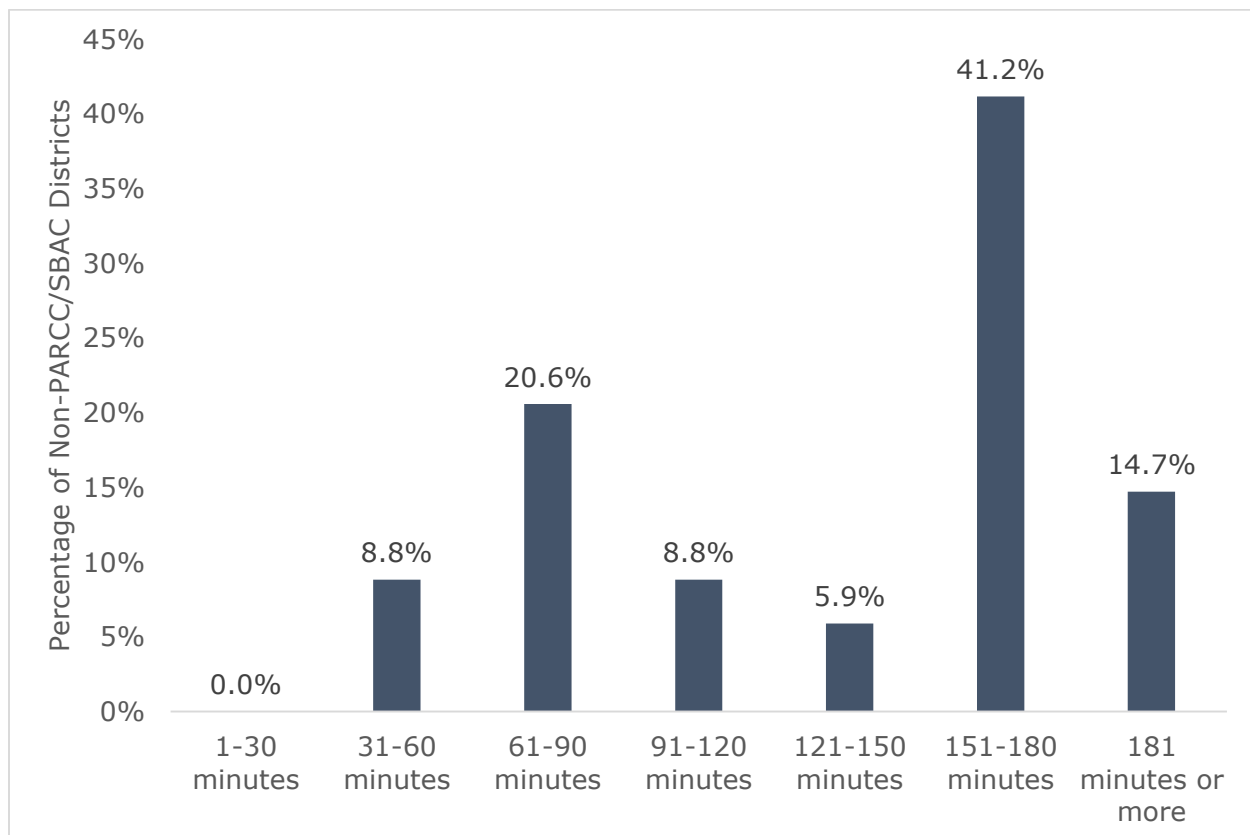
	Algebra I, Geometry	2:45	2:45	1:00	2:20	2:15	11:05
	Algebra II	2:45	2:45	1:00	2:30	2:15	11:15

NOTE: PBA is performance-based assessment; EOY is end of year; LA is literary analysis; RS is research simulation; and NW is narrative writing.

The Council also looked at the amount of time that students were involved in taking NCLB-required exams other than PARCC or SBAC exams, i.e., the previous year's exam or a new state-developed or purchased exam. Figure 6 shows the results.

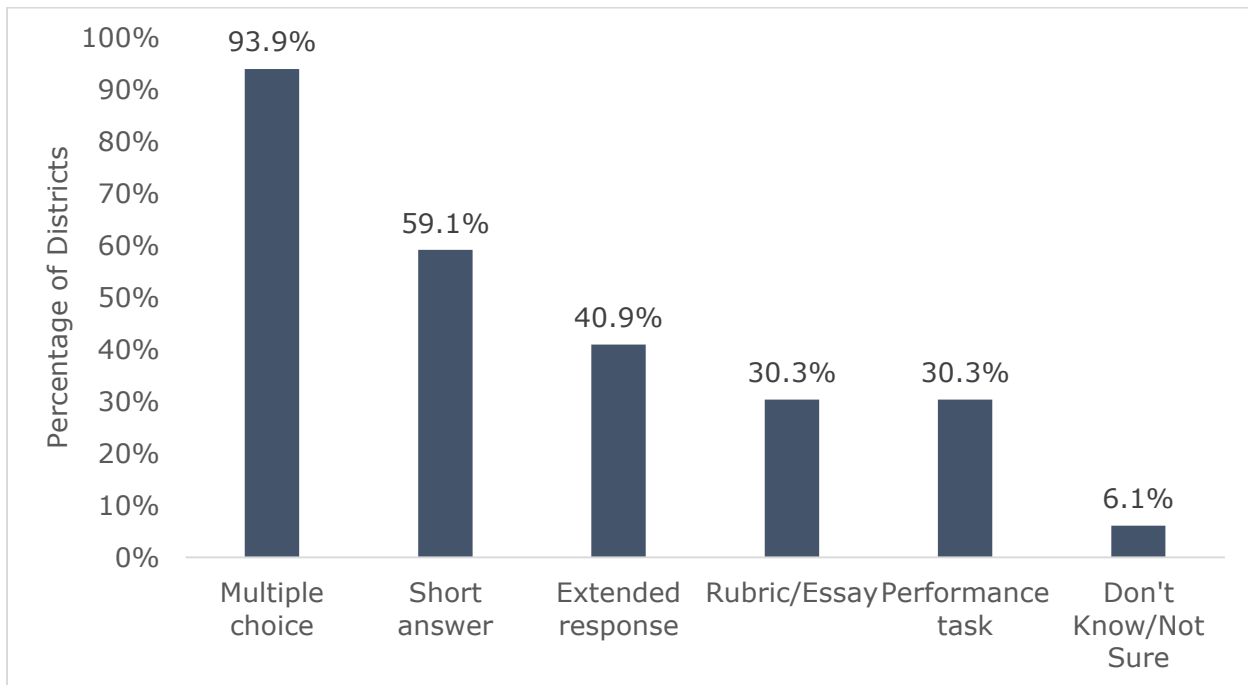
The data indicate that most of the state exams administered pursuant to NCLB took either between an hour and an hour-and-a-half or between two and two-and-a-half hours. Only about 14.7 percent of the districts administered exams that were as long as three hours. In other words, few of these state-developed or acquired exams were as time-consuming as the PARCC or SBAC exams were in 2014-15.

Figure 6. Time Allotted for General Education Students to Complete State-Developed NCLB Assessments (Excluding PARCC/SBAC)



The Council also asked its school districts to specify what types of items were being used on these NCLB-required state exams. The results are shown in Figure 7. Some 94 percent of districts reported that their state tests given pursuant to NCLB contained multiple-choice items.

Figure 7. Item Types for All PARCC/SBAC/Other State NCLB Assessments

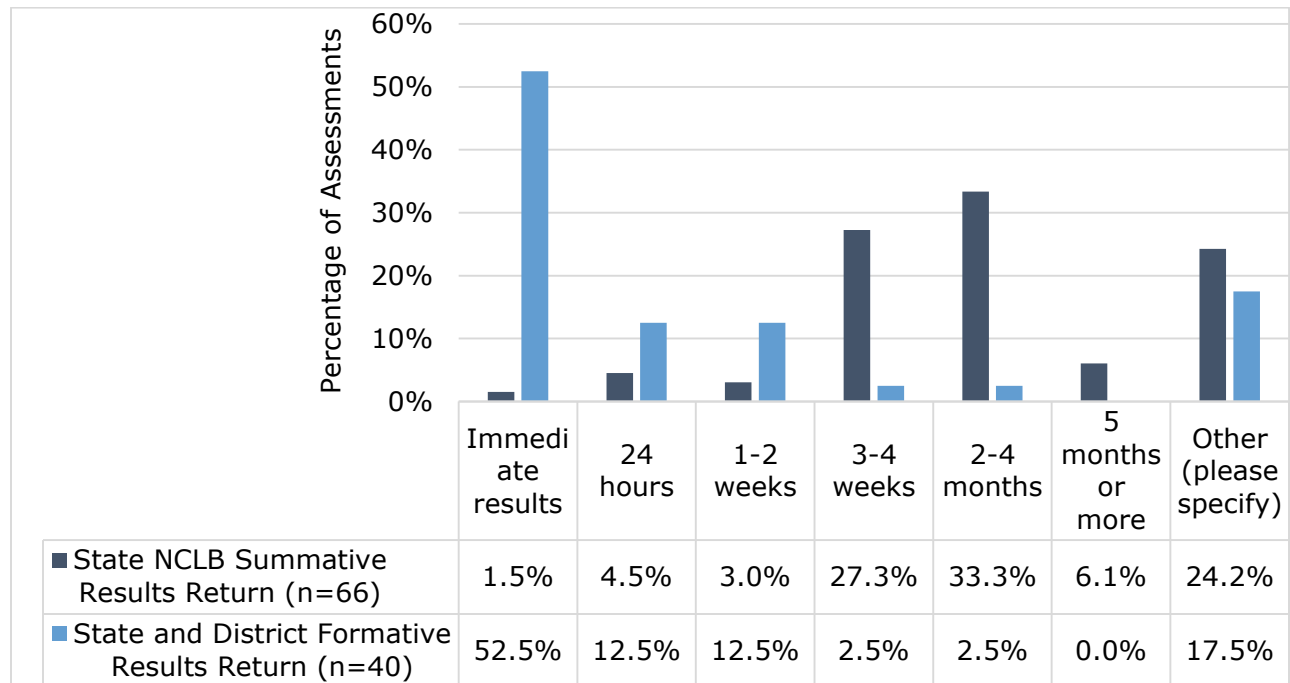


In addition, 59.1 percent of districts reported that their state exam included short-answer questions, and 40.9 percent indicated that their state exams included extended-response items. Over 30 percent of the districts indicated that their state tests included essays or performance tasks in 2014-15. While we do not have firm data on this point, we suspect that the inclusion of items other than multiple-choice questions on state tests has increased in recent years.

In addition, we should note that parents and the public have asked for better, high-quality assessments that include the kind of performance tasks and extended-response questions that PARCC, SBAC, and some new state exams are now offering. Historically, we have made a trade-off between higher-quality items that may require more time and lower-quality multiple-choice items that were cheaper to score and required less time. PARCC, SBAC, and other similar tests were designed to rebalance those scales toward higher quality.

We also asked districts to indicate how long it took states to return results of the NCLB summative assessments to districts and how long it took the districts to turn around the results of formative assessments to schools (discussed in a subsequent section). The districts reported that it typically took states between two and four months to return results of the NCLB summative tests, while about half of the districts reported that they were able to turn around state and local formative results immediately. (See Figure 8.) The reader should keep in mind that state summative tests, including PARCC and SBAC, were new in 2014-15 and that the return rate for these tests would be shorter in subsequent years.

Figure 8. Return Rate for State and District NCLB and Formative Assessment Results



Finally, the data also indicated that continuing changes in testing practices at the state level was adding to the inability of school districts to track and evaluate their reforms. Between 2011 and 2014, some 46 percent of all state-mandated summative tests administered in the 66 districts changed in a way that prevented those districts from tracking student achievement over an extended period. In 2015, because of the advent of new college- and career-ready tests, the state summative assessments in 65 percent of the city school systems had changed. In other words, there were almost no tests in 2015 that had also been given in 2011.

2) End-of-Course Assessments

Some 47 of the 66 urban school districts on which we have data—or 71.2 percent—administer end-of-course assessments (EOCs) in one or more subjects.

These exams are normally given at the end of the school year, usually in the secondary grades, to measure student attainment in a particular course or to assess mastery of specific subject material. Courses in which EOCs are given typically include English literature (particularly in ninth and tenth grades), Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, physical science, biology, chemistry, and American history, among other courses.

Districts sometimes administer EOCs to ensure that students are exposed to similar material from school to school. Similarly, states may require EOCs to ensure comparable instruction in a subject across schools in a state. Teachers have been giving final exams for many decades, of course, but the new generation of end-of-course tests are typically standardized exams and are sometimes used to fulfill requirements under NCLB or NCLB waivers.

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Several states have included EOCs in their ESEA accountability models to fulfill NCLB requirements that students be assessed at least once in high school. Georgia, for example, replaced the Georgia High School Graduation Tests in math, ELA, science, and social studies (four assessments in grade 11) with 10 end-of-course assessments (two ELA, four math, two science, and two social studies assessments).

In other states and districts, students take both EOC exams and their state-required summative test in the same subjects. New Mexico, for example, added EOC exams but continued to require its Standards Based Assessment (SBA) for graduation. That state now requires EOCs in 41 different high school courses and a number of fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade courses (math, science, social studies, ELA, etc.), although all students may not take all courses associated with an EOC. (Several are CTE courses, business courses, or visual and performing arts.) These two examples illustrate how students in both states were faced with additional high school assessment requirements during the last school year.

In addition, the use of EOC exams as part of final course grades varies considerably. Again, in Georgia and other states, EOC exams are intended to replace final examinations and they accounted for 20 percent of a final course grade. In contrast, performance on EOCs in the Albuquerque Public Schools in spring 2015 was “NOT [to] be used as a course final [exam].”⁶ Consequently, some teachers may have administered final exams to help determine grades in courses that also had EOC exams.

The charts below show district responses on EOC features (Figures 9-13). The data indicate that districts having EOC exams administer an average of 2.5 math exams in their secondary grades, 1.9 English exams, 1.8 science tests, and 1.7 social studies exams. (See Figure 9.)

The Council survey also asked districts about the types of questions or items that the EOC exams included. Some 98 percent (97.9 percent) of districts reported that their EOC exams had multiple-choice items—about the same percentage of districts reporting that their state summative assessments had multiple-choice items.

Moreover, 66 percent of districts reported that their EOC tests included short-answer questions, a level that was somewhat higher than the number of districts reporting that their state summative assessments had short-answer questions. (See Figure 10.)

About forty-nine percent (48.9 percent) of districts indicated that their EOC tests had extended response items, compared to 40.9 percent of districts reporting that their state assessments had such items. Just over half (51.1 percent) reported that their EOC exams had essay questions, and 40.4 percent reported that their EOCs had performance tasks, compared to 30.3 percent of districts

⁶ Albuquerque Public Schools (March 18, 2015) End of Course Exam Guide for Spring 2015. The Assessment and Testing Department of Organizational Accountability and Reporting, page 26. Retrieved from <http://www.aps.edu/assessment/eoc-documents-folder/eoc-guidelines-spring-2015>

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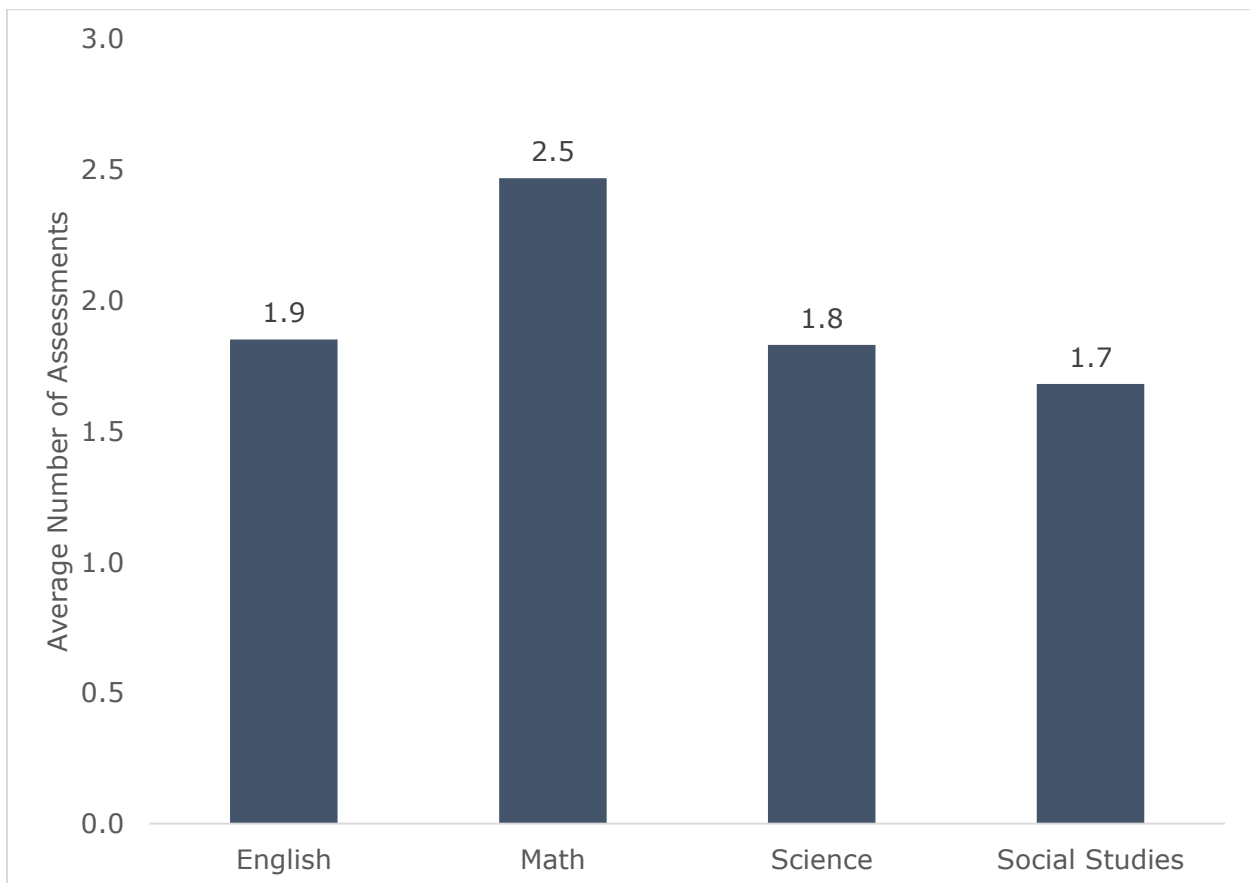
reporting that their mandated state exams had such items. In other words, more districts reported that their EOC tests made greater use of items other than multiple-choice questions than did their mandated state tests.

Districts were also asked about the length of the EOC exams they administered. Some 34 percent of districts reported that their EOCs were between an hour and an hour-and-a-half in length; 23.4 percent indicated that the EOCs were an hour-and-a-half to two hours in length; and 23.4 percent reported that their EOCs were three hours or more in length. (See Figure 11.)

Of course, the total amount of time spent on EOCs varies by grade. Figure 12 presents the average number of hours students spent taking EOCs at each grade in high school—a number that is highest for ninth-grade students and decreases each year as students progress toward grade 12. (See Figure 12.)

Finally, three quarters (74.5 percent) of districts with EOCs report that results of these exams factor into their state accountability systems as a result of NCLB waivers. (See Figure 13.)

Figure 9. Average Number of Secondary-grade Level EOCs by Subject Area (in Districts Having EOCs)



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Figure 10. EOC Item Types

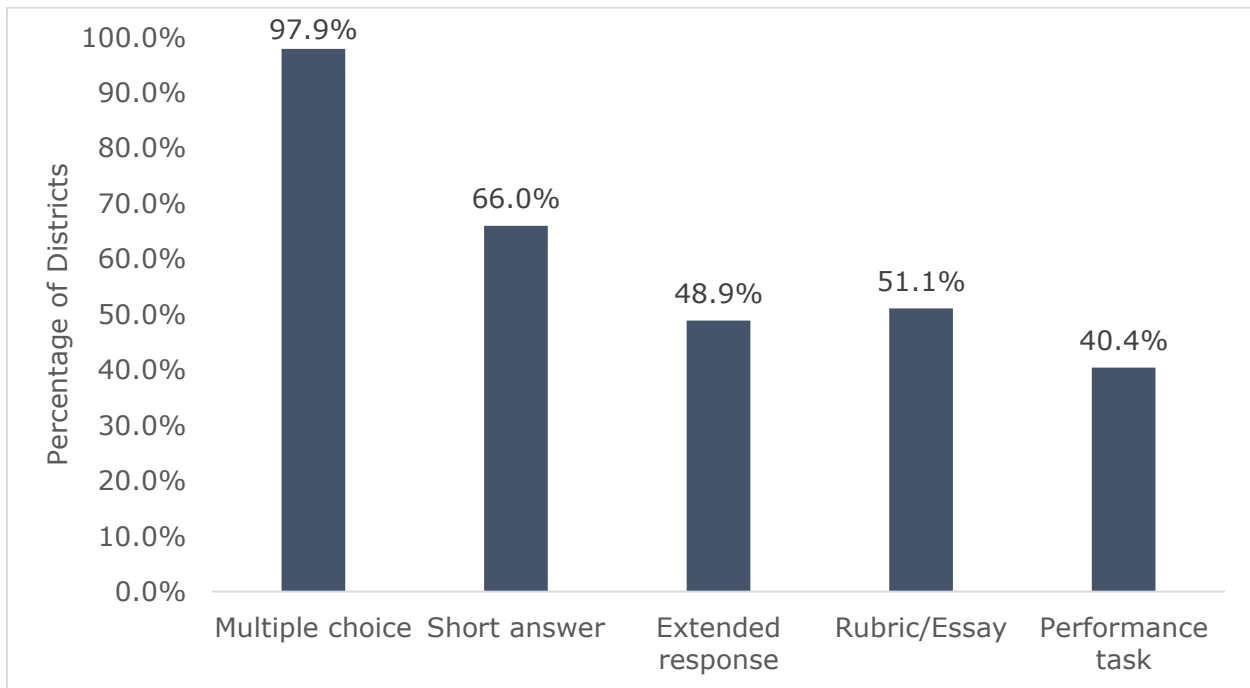
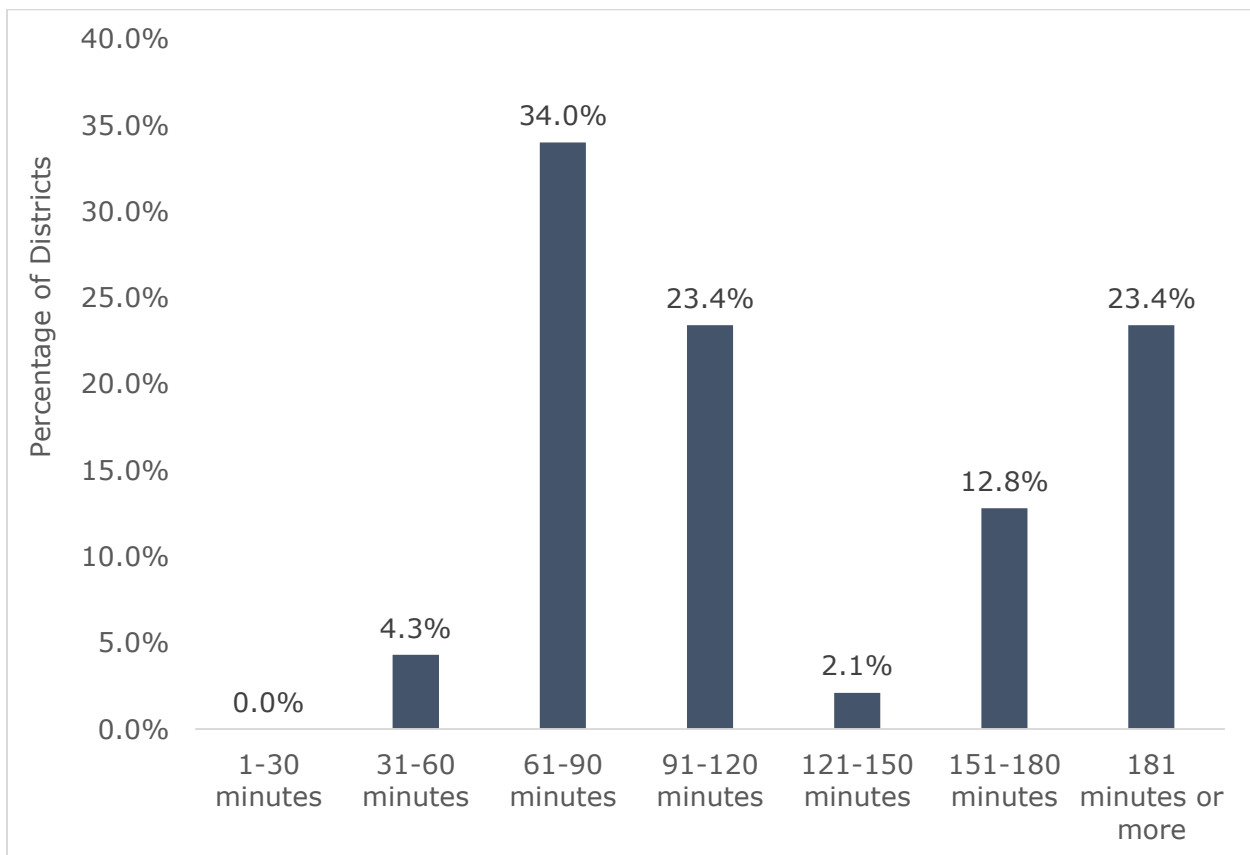
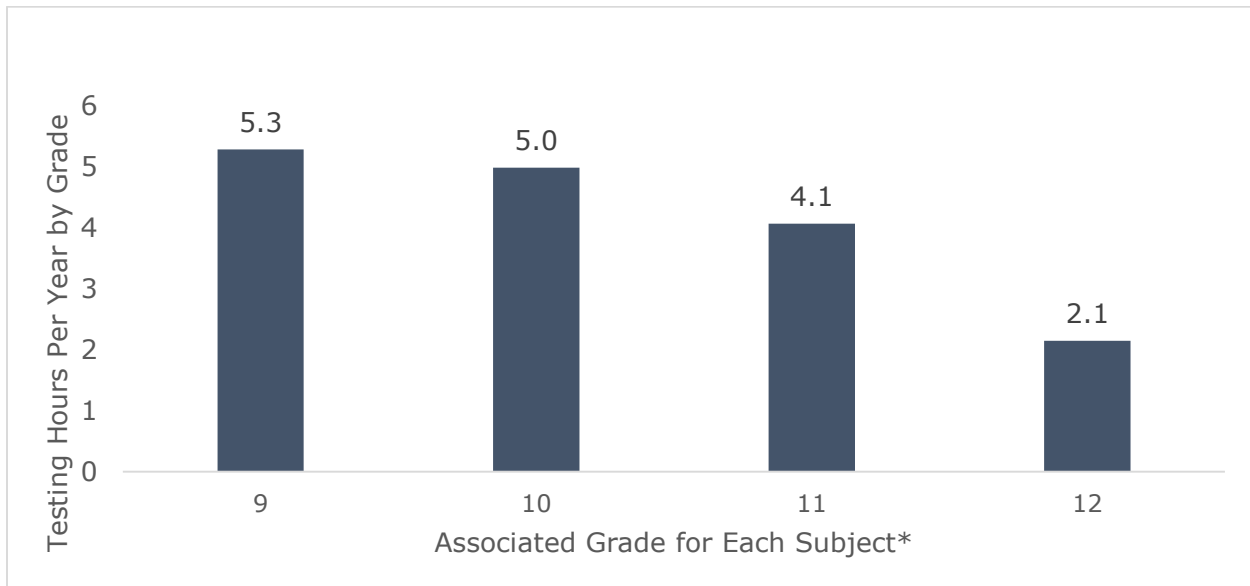


Figure 11. Time Allotted for General Education Students to Complete EOC Assessments



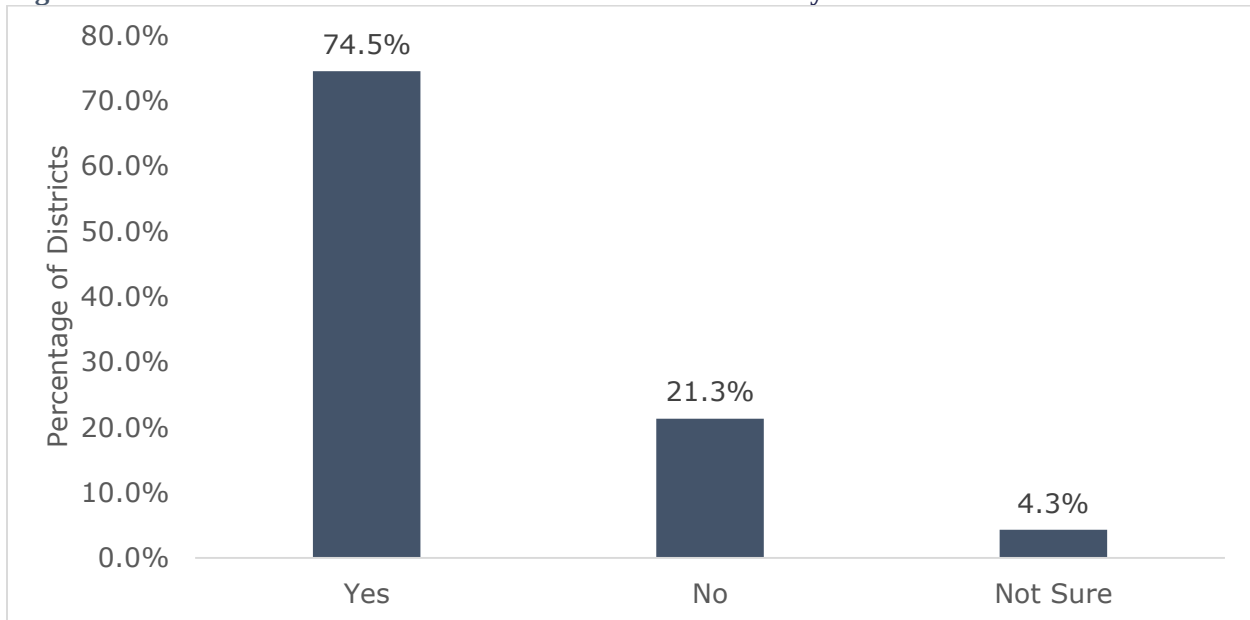
Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

Figure 12. Average Testing Time in Hours per Grade for EOC Assessments



*Note: EOC exams are given by course not by grade, but courses were associated with a typical grade in which the course is taken. For example, Algebra 1 is associated with grade 9.

Figure 13. EOC Assessments Included in State Accountability as a Result of NCLB Waivers



3) State and District Formative Assessments

In addition to mandated state summative exams and EOCs, many urban school districts (59.1 percent) reported that they administered districtwide formative assessments over the course of the 2014-15 school year that were mandated by either the state or the district. Some districts also administered formative assessments that were mandated by the state for some students or grades, and by the district for other students or grades.

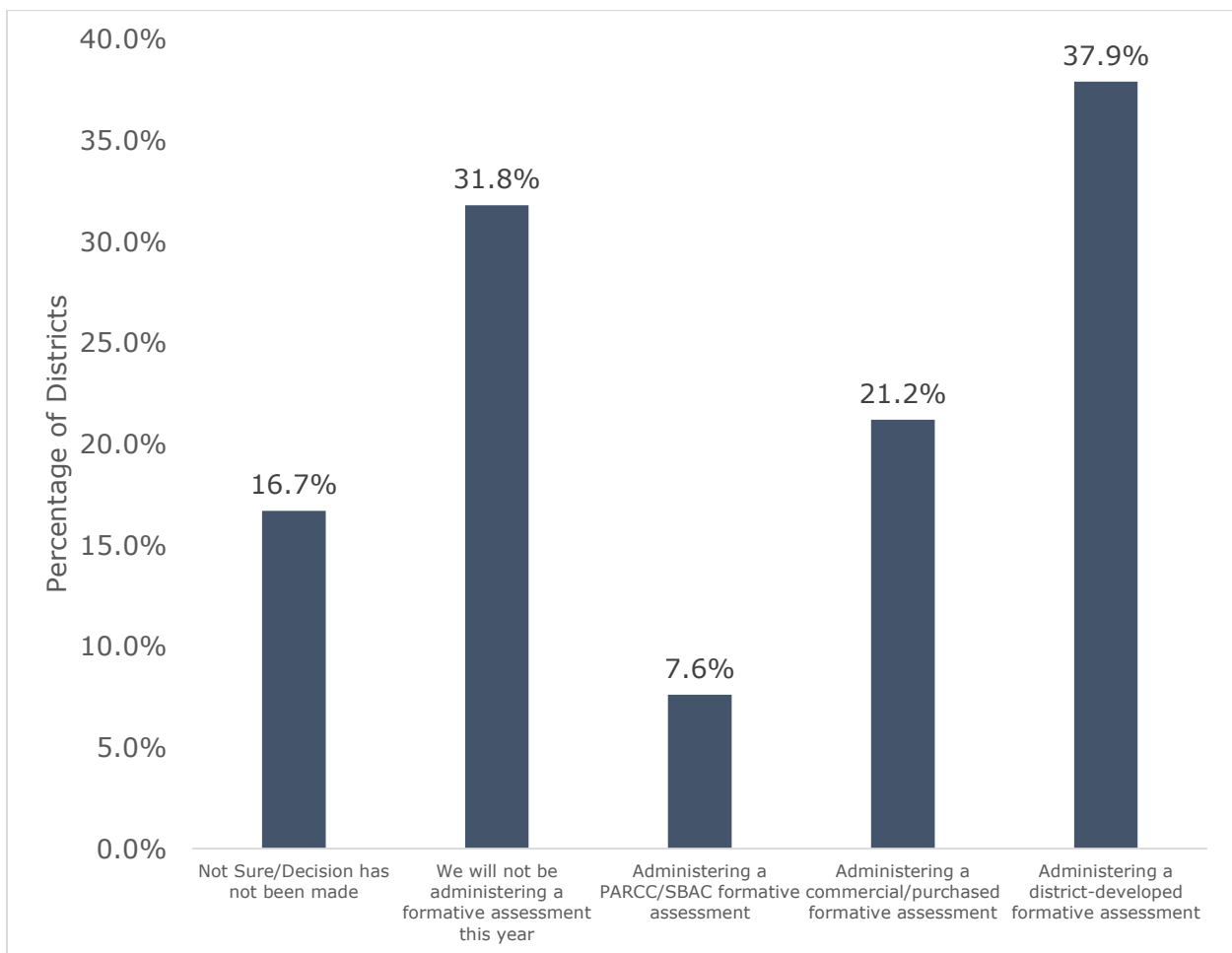
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Some 37.9 percent of the districts reported that they developed the formative exams themselves—sometimes on their own and sometimes based on a state requirement. In addition, some 21.2 percent of the districts reported using a commercially developed formative test, and 7.6 percent reported using one of the PARCC or SBAC formative tests. (See Figure 14.) Some of these formatives were part of state applications for U.S. Department of Education waivers to NCLB or Race-to-the-Top grants.

It was clear from interviews with district staff that some districts elected to make formative assessments optional this school year as a result of the transition to new college- and career-ready tests. However, almost all districts indicated that these formative assessments might be reinstituted for students and schools in the 2015-16 school year once alignment to the new standards is complete.

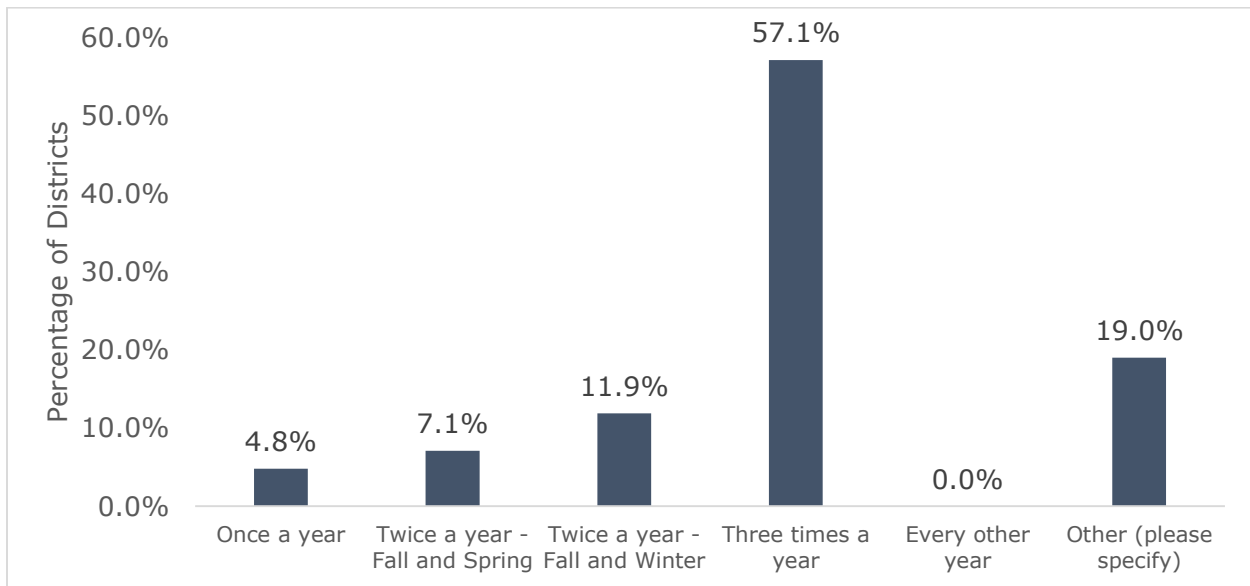
In addition, almost half of the districts administering formative assessments gave them three times during the school year. (See Figure 15.)

Figure 14. Districtwide Formative Assessment Administration



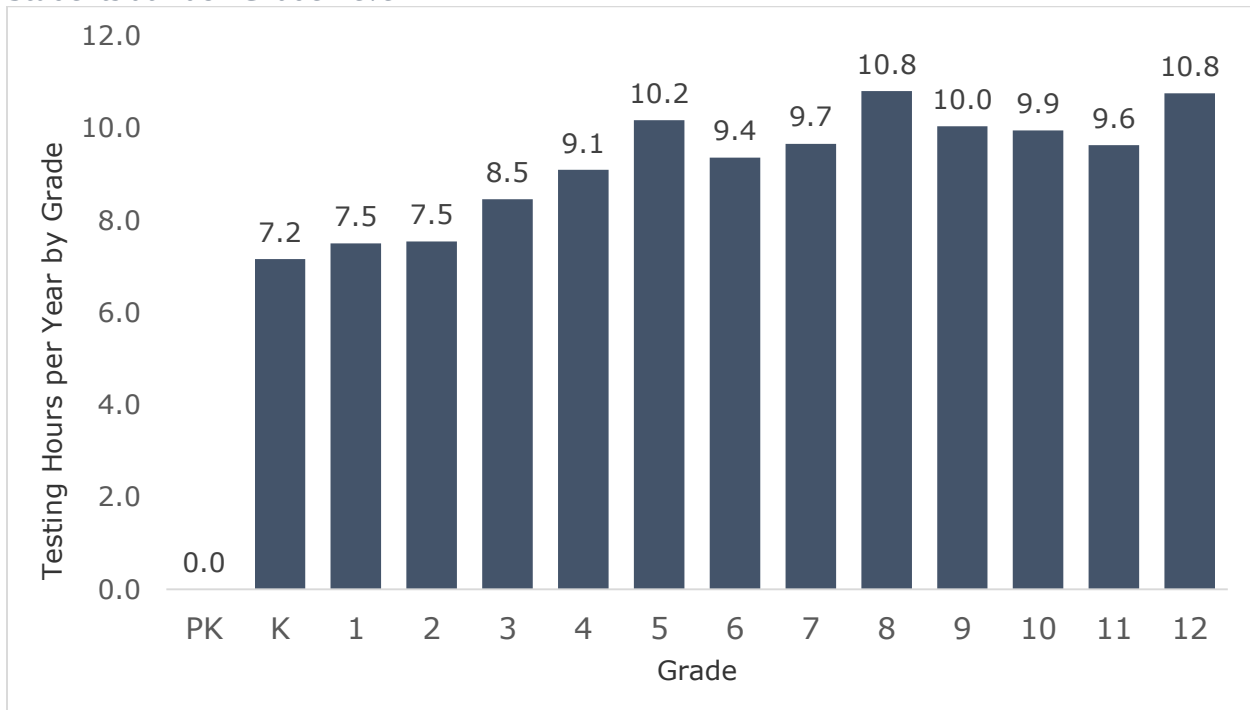
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Figure 15. Frequency of Formative Assessments



Finally, the data show that considerable testing time was devoted to formative assessments in the 2014-15 school year. On average, students spent between 7.2 hours and 10.8 hours last school year taking formative assessments, depending on the grade. (See Figure 16.) The amount of time devoted to these exams appeared to depend more on the number of times the tests were given over the course of the school year than on the number of tests *per se*.

Figure 16. Average Testing Time per Year for Formative Assessments Mandated for All Students at Each Grade Level



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4) Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Some 37.9 percent, or 25 of the 66 districts on which we have data, reported implementing SLO assessments in non-NCLB-tested grades and subjects in the 2014-15 school year, over and above state summative tests, formative exams, and EOC tests.⁷

According to the Race-to-the-Top Reform Support Network SLO toolkit, student learning objectives (SLOs) or value-added tests began in 1999 in the Denver Public Schools as a measure of student growth in its pilot teacher performance-pay system in tested and non-tested grades and subjects.⁸ The tool kit also indicates that states and districts did not use SLOs as a component in educator-evaluation systems until first- and second-round winners of the U.S. Department of Education's Race-to-the-Top grant were "required to implement teacher evaluation systems that differentiate effectiveness."

The toolkit explains that "while many winning states could point to their growth measures for teachers in tested grades and subjects, they had little or nothing to measure the performance of teachers of non-tested grades and subjects (for example, kindergarten, first-grade and second-grade teachers; special education, music and art teachers; and physical education, career, technical, social studies, and science teachers)."

A considerable number of states and districts have therefore elected to implement student learning objectives to meet these perceived requirements. (See Appendix A.) These tests are often included in state waiver applications to the U.S. Department of Education, and are normally developed by teachers themselves, districts, technical assistance centers and consultants, states, and others. These exams are often used for teacher-evaluation purposes, are of mixed technical quality, and have resulted in a substantial amount of new testing in America's schools.

Both teachers and psychometricians have concerns about the quality of SLOs. In a survey of Rhode Island teachers, over 80 percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "SLOs (1) provide sound evidence for measuring teacher performance, (2) contribute valuable evidence to teachers' overall effectiveness ratings, and (3) provide comparability of rigor in measuring impact on student outcomes."⁹

⁷ This study counted SLOs once per school year. Sometimes these assessments were administered once and sometimes twice as pre- and post-tests.

⁸ Reform Support Network. (2012). A quality control toolkit for student learning objectives. U. S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/slo-toolkit.pdf>.

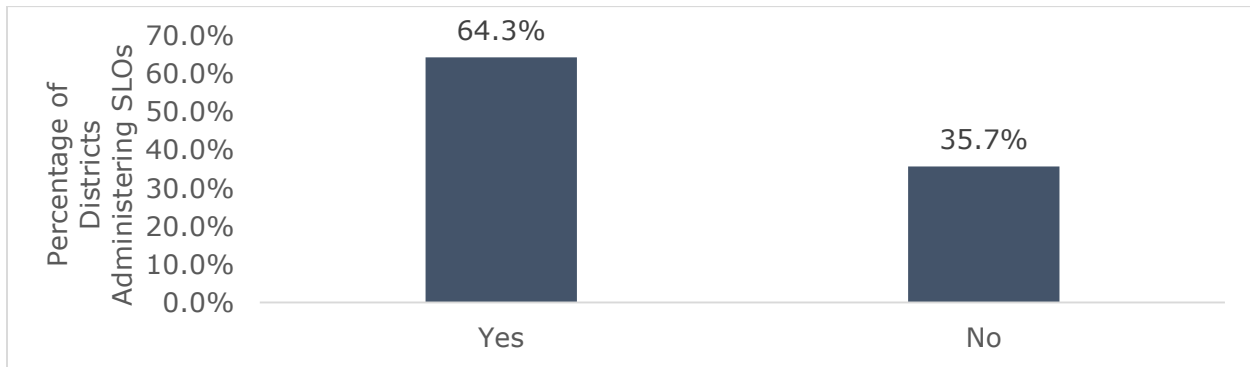
⁹ Slotnick, W. Smith, M., & Liang, G. (September 2013). Focus on Rhode Island: Student Learning Objectives and Evaluation. Boston, MA: Community Training Assistance Center. Retrieved from www.ctacusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/focusonRhodeIsland.pdf

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Similarly, James Popham, a nationally recognized assessment expert, agreed that the SLO process is dependent on teachers' ability to set and accurately measure meaningful growth targets over the course of a school year.¹⁰

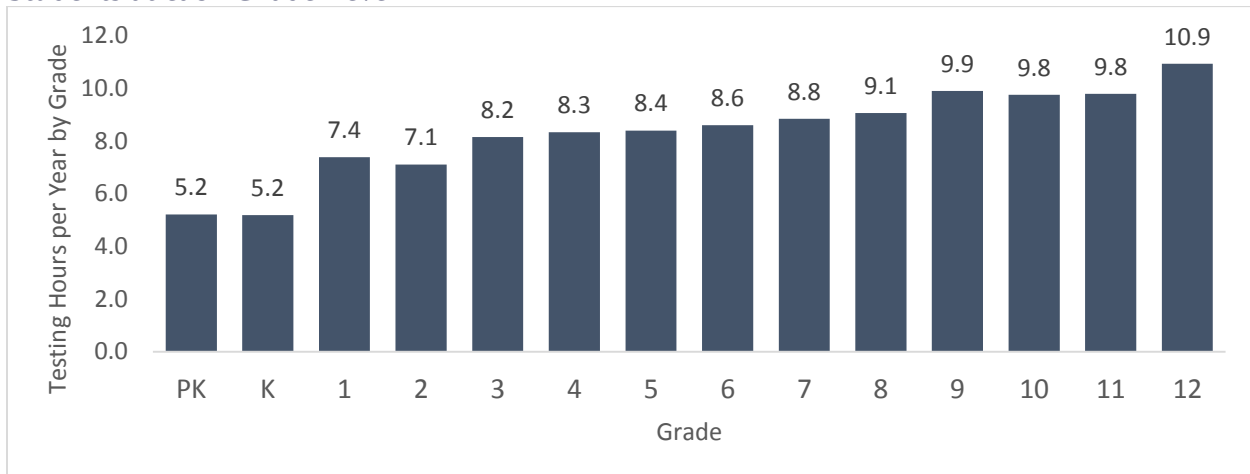
Some 64.3 percent of districts using these tests report that they were included in their state's accountability system. (See Figure 17.)

Figure 17. SLO Assessments Included in State Accountability



In districts that administered SLOs, students devoted a substantial amount of time taking them. Students spent between 5.2 and 10.9 hours taking these exams in the last school year.¹¹ (See Figure 18.) It was also clear from the data that the number of hours students spend taking these tests is significant, even in grades where NCLB requires a state summative exam.

Figure 18. Average Testing Time per Year for SLO Assessments for the Population of Students at each Grade Level



¹⁰ Popham, J. (December 11, 2013). The Pseudo-science of evaluating teachers via a “Student Learning Objectives” Strategy. *Education Week*. Retrieved from blogs.edweek.org/edweek/finding_common_ground/2013/12/the_pseudo-science_of_evaluatinnng_teachers_via_a_student_learning_objectives_strategy.html

¹¹ These numbers were calculated on the basis of what the districts reported on the survey, but districts may not know the full extent of SLO testing because some are teacher developed.

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5) Other Mandated Assessments – Interim/Benchmark Tests, Nationally Normed Tests, College Entrance Exams, Pre-K Tests, and Other Assessments Required of All Students in Designated Grades

This group of exams is generally, but not always, mandated by the districts themselves for all students at a designated grade level and is in addition to state summative tests, EOC exams, formative assessments, and SLOs. The most prevalent assessments from the survey results in this mandated category included—

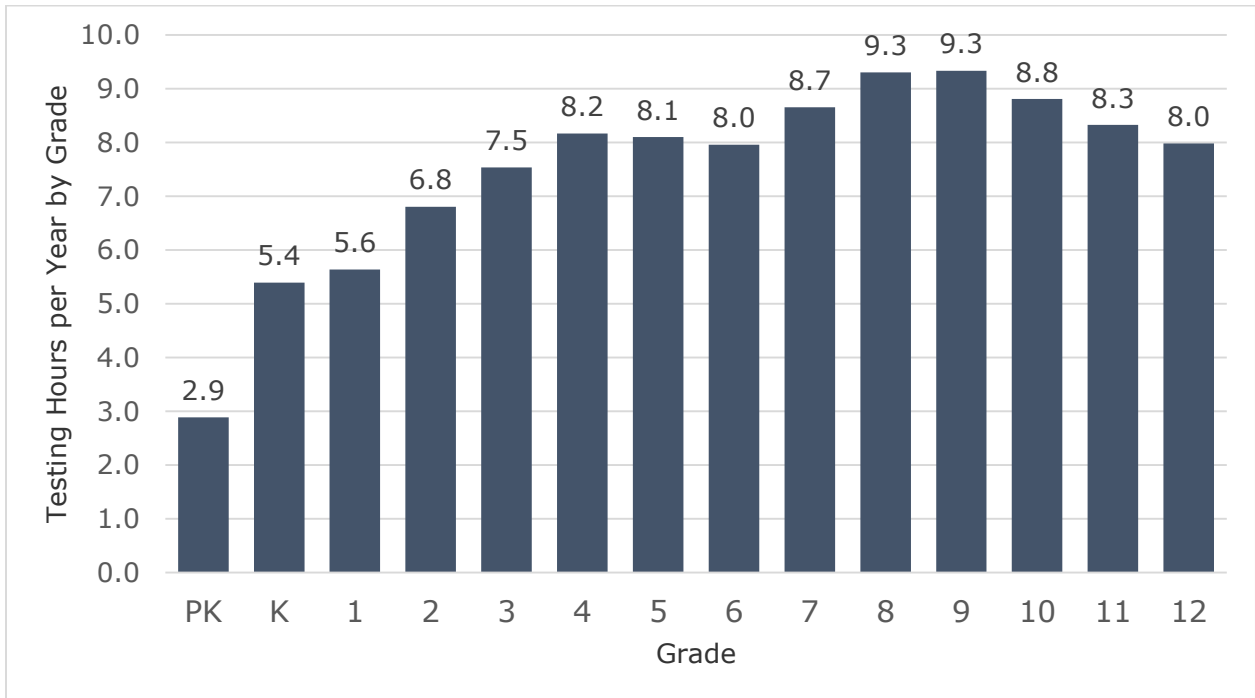
- ACT Plan
- ACT Explore
- NWEA MAP
- DIBELS
- CogAT
- ITBS
- STAR

Other instruments in this category include such norm-referenced exams as the Terranova, the SAT-10, various screening devices such as Running Records, Fountas and Pinnell, and pre-K assessments—when they are administered to everyone in a particular grade. (If these assessments are given only to a sample of students, then they are included in the next section of this report.) Districts overall report administering over 100 unique assessments in this category. (See Appendix E.)

The data collected for this project on other mandated assessments indicated that students devoted an average of between 2.9 hours and 9.3 hours last school year taking these tests, depending on the student's grade. (See Figure 19.) The amount of time increased incrementally from kindergarten up through grade four, and then held somewhat steady (even dipping slightly) until spiking up at the end of the middle-school years in grades seven and eight. In high school, testing time for these other mandated assessments started out at a high of 9.3 hours, and decreased steadily as students progressed toward grade 12.

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Figure 19. Average Testing Time per Year for All Other Mandated Assessments for the Population of Students at Each Grade Level



The data collected for this project indicated that there was often considerable redundancy in these exams. For example, multiple exams were sometimes given in the same subjects and grades to the same students because not all results yielded data by item, grade, subject, student, or school—thereby prompting districts to give another exam in order to get data at the desired level of granularity. We found multiple examples of students taking an EOC, an AP test, and a final exam in the same course. In one district, for example, NWEA-MAP and STAR were both given to students three times a year despite the fact that they are both computer adaptive, both administered in the same subjects, and likely yielded comparable information on the same students.

Some of this redundancy is the result of aggressive salesmanship on the part of testing vendors. And some of the inconsistency in testing at the local level can occur when a state or district requires a particular test, but principals and/or teachers in a school decide they want to administer something else.

There were also a number of instances where districts used standardized assessments in this category for purposes other than what they were designed for. And our review suggests that some mandatory tests are not well aligned to each other and are not aligned with any college- or career-ready standards. In fact, many nationally normed exams were developed prior to the creation of college- and career-ready standards. For example, the Stanford 10 uses 2007 norms and was built on earlier standards and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills uses 2005 norms and has a 2007 copyright. Most computer-adaptive assessments such as the NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress

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(MAP), Scholastic's Reading and Math Inventories, and Renaissance Learning's STAR assessments mapped their old testing blueprints onto new college- and career-ready standards or linked their test scores to new college- and career-ready expectations by using Lexile levels, equi-percentile equating, or other statistical procedures. In each of these examples, however, the development of the assessments were not based on the new standards themselves. It should also be noted that many of these mandated exams do not actually test a student's knowledge on any particular content area.

Finally, the Council's survey also included questions about district use of pre-K assessments, and many of the charts and graphs presented in this report include summary information about these pre-K assessments. Many of the Great City School districts offer only a limited number of pre-K classrooms—and our focus was not on getting a full count of all these instruments. In addition, many of the pre-K programs that are operated on school sites may not necessarily be operated by the school district itself, so the school system may have limited knowledge of the assessment tools that are being used. Consequently, we do not offer an extended analysis or discussion of pre-K assessments in this report.

For a detailed description of state pre-K assessments, we refer the reader to the report written by Ackerman and Coley from the Educational Testing Service.¹² The report details the varied use of these assessments, observation checklists and scales, and other state-suggested or -mandated methods of assessment. Several of these assessments are considered nationally normed, standardized assessments while others are observational tools.

Still, the districts in this study use a range of pre-K instruments, including—

- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT),¹³
- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS-Pre-K),¹⁴
- Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning-Third Edition (DIAL-3),¹⁵
- Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement,¹⁶
- Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL).¹⁷

¹² Ackerman, D. & Coley, R. (February, 2012). *State Pre-K Assessment Policies: Issues and Status*. Educational Testing Service, Policy Evaluation and Research Center. Retrieved from <https://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-PRE-K.pdf>.

¹³ Dunn, L., and Dunn, D. (2007). Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (4th Edition). Pearson Education, Inc.

¹⁴ Ivernizzi, A., Sullivan, A., Meier, J., and Swank, L. (2004). Pre-K Teachers Manual: PALS Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia.

¹⁵ Mardell-Czudnowski, C. and Goldenberg, D. (1998). Developmental indicators for the assessment of learning – Third edition (DIAL-3). Bloomington, MN: Pearson Assessments.

¹⁶ Woodcock, R.W., McGrew, K.S., and Mather, N. (2001). Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement. Itasca, IL: Riverside.

¹⁷ Lonigan, C., Wagner, R., and Torgesen, J. (2007). Test of Preschool Early Literacy: TOPEL. Austin: Pro-ed.

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Several states have also developed pre-K assessments for use in classrooms such as the Hawaii Early Learning Profile¹⁸ and the Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading-K.¹⁹

B. Other Considerations with Mandatory Assessments

In addition to results specific to the various mandated assessments covered above, there are a number of cross-cutting issues worth articulating in the overall discussion of required testing. These include the factors that drive testing time, the issue of student opt-outs, and the relationship between mandated testing time and student achievement.

1) What Affects Testing Time

The amount of testing time required of students is not defined exclusively by the number of assessments that a district administers. In fact, it is often the case that what differentiates districts with large amounts of testing time from those with relatively small amounts is not the number of tests given but the number of times a year that each test is administered.

Table 2 below illustrates how this works. Both Detroit and St. Paul administer the NWEA MAP each year, but Detroit gives the test in more subjects and more frequently than does St. Paul. The result is that Detroit devotes six times more time to testing on the NWEA than does St. Paul. Additional examples from these two districts will be presented later in this report.

Table 2. Comparison of Mandatory Testing Time in Two Districts

Detroit	St. Paul
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
• Three times a year in four subjects (ELA, Math, Reading, and Science)	• Two times a year in one subject (math)
• About 720 minutes per year per student	• About 120 minutes per student per year

In fact, for all mandatory assessments, the amount of testing-related time that a school district has will be the result of a number of factors, including--

- ✚ The number of tests that are administered
- ✚ The number of subjects that are tested
- ✚ The number of times each school year that a test is given
- ✚ The number of extended-response or performance items and tasks on the tests
- ✚ The amount of test-prep time that is devoted to the assessments
- ✚ The amount of time required to arrange for and administer the tests
- ✚ The state in which the district is located

¹⁸ Teafor, P., Wheat, J., and Baker, T. (2010). HELP 3-6 Assessment Manual (2nd Edition). Palo Alto, CA: VORT Corporation.

¹⁹ Florida Department of Education. (2009). Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading. Tallahassee, FL.

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Moreover, most testing is done in the second semester of the school year, although some school districts will often give at least one formative assessment in the first semester and several diagnostic tests for special populations early in the school year. Student Learning Objective exams will often have a pre-test that is given in the first part of the school year. Nonetheless, the bulk of testing is done in the second semester of the school year, making the period between the end of January and May feel like it is exclusively devoted to testing.

Finally, it is important to note that the amount of testing time for all mandated assessments reflects the number of lost instructional hours for an individual student, but it could have even greater impact on the amount of teaching time by an individual teacher. For example, some early childhood reading assessments such as DIBELS, Running Records, etc. are administered to students individually and not as a group. Teachers spend between 30 and 45 minutes administering assessments such as these to each child individually in a class, so testing time for teachers can impact instructional time significantly (for example, 10 hours for 20 students taking a 30-minute individual assessment, not including transition time between students).

2) Opt-Outs

One of the most controversial aspects of mandated assessments, particularly the summative state exams in reading and math, involves the movement by parents to opt out of tests for their children. The movement last school year was part of a nationwide protest against the number and use of standardized tests. There was wide speculation that much of the protest was centered in economically more well-to-do areas, but there was scant information nationally to know for sure.

As part of this project, the Council gathered data from its member urban school systems on the extent to which parental opting out impacted big city school systems. There were a number of individual schools in big cities where the number of parents opting out of tests was substantial, but those schools turned out to be anomalies.

Instead, the data indicate that the number and percentage of parents and students opting out of the tests was about one percent in most urban locales. (The median was less than one percent.) For instance, Baltimore City, Cincinnati, Clark County, Cleveland, the District of Columbia, Fresno, Long Beach, Milwaukee, New York City, Providence, Sacramento, San Francisco, and many others had opt-out rates ranging from less than one percent to under two percent. However, there were a small number of cities where the opt-out numbers or percentages were substantial, including Rochester (20 percent), Buffalo (15 percent), Albuquerque (6 percent), and Portland (3 percent). Finally, we found no examples where other mandated tests like the PSAT experienced opt-outs.

3) Relationship between Mandated Testing Time and Student Achievement

Results from NAEP are often used with Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) districts to better understand the relationship between various district characteristics and student achievement. In this case, we use NAEP data from the TUDA districts to determine if there is any relationship

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between student performance in reading and math on NAEP and the amount of time devoted to mandated testing. To do this, the Council research team correlated the number of mandated testing minutes in the TUDA districts with student reading and math scores on NAEP.²⁰

Figures 20 and 21 show the relationships in scatter plots between testing time from kindergarten through grade four and NAEP grade four reading ($r = -0.023$, $p=0.920$) and math performance ($r = -0.057$, $p=0.805$). The correlations show that there was no relationship between testing time and NAEP performance. Similarly, Figures 22 and 23 show the correlations between testing time from kindergarten through grade eight and NAEP grade eight reading ($r = 0.032$, $p=0.890$) and math performance ($r = 0.020$, $p=0.932$). Again, the relationships are not significant.

Overall, the data suggest that testing time does not correlate with reading and math outcomes. This suggests that increasing the number or frequency of assessments does not improve student achievement.

²⁰ The research team also analyzed the relationship between testing time and NAEP scores after correcting for free and reduced price lunch status and found no significant relationship. Also, the data were analyzed after omitting outliers, but the results indicated no significant relationship between testing time and NAEP scores. Finally, there was no significant relationship between testing time and improvements on NAEP scores.

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Figure 20. Relationship Between Testing Time in Grades K to 4 and Fourth Grade NAEP Scores in Math

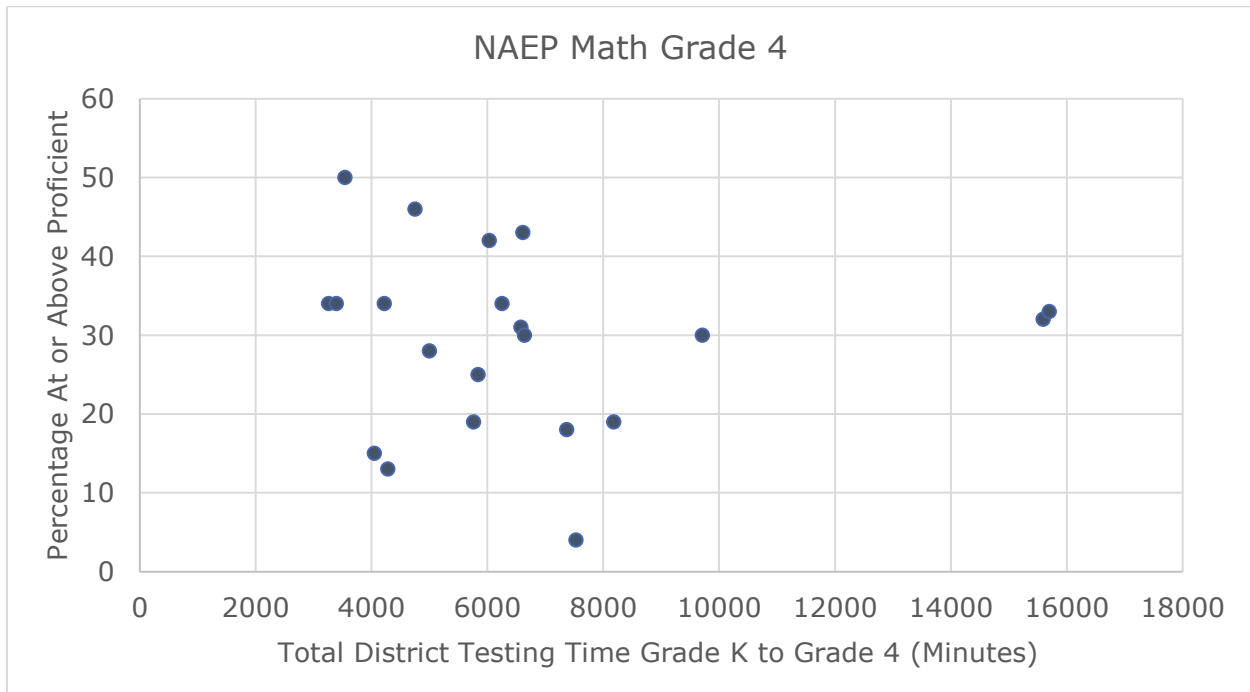
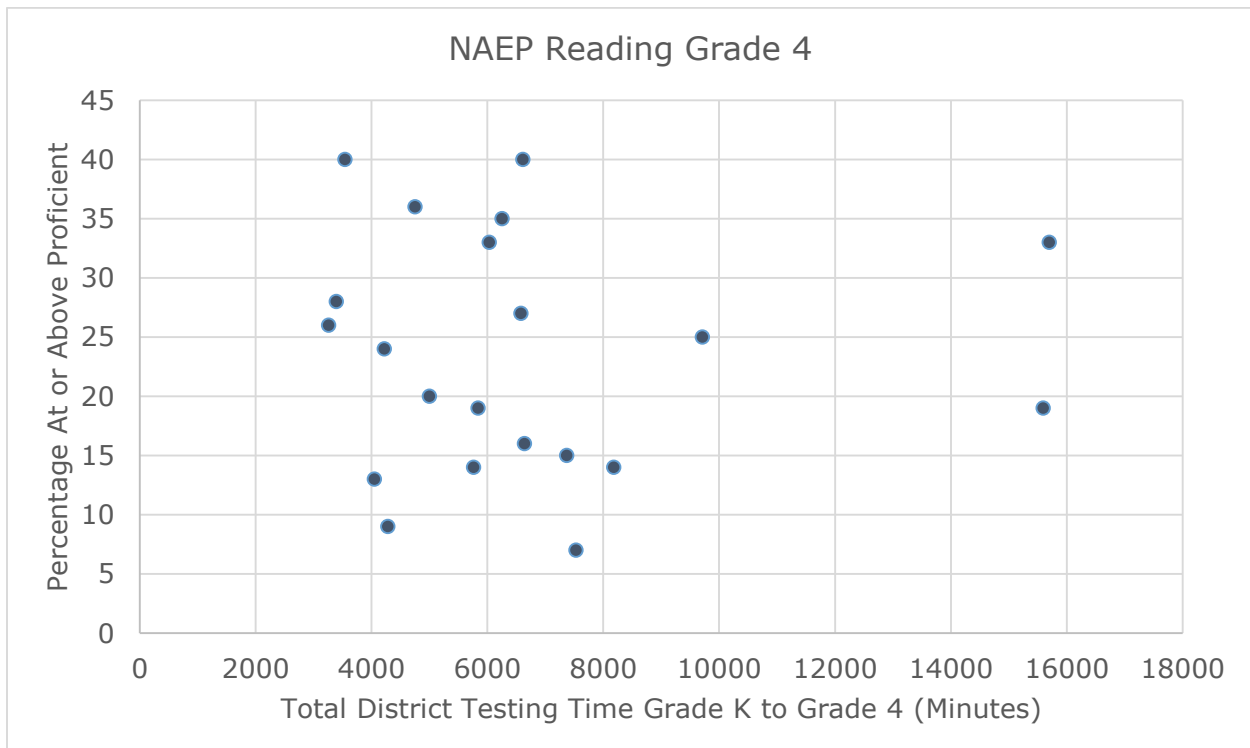


Figure 21. Relationship Between Testing Time in Grades K to 4 and Fourth Grade NAEP Scores in Reading



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Figure 22. Relationship Between Testing Time in Grades K to 8 and Eighth Grade NAEP Scores in Math

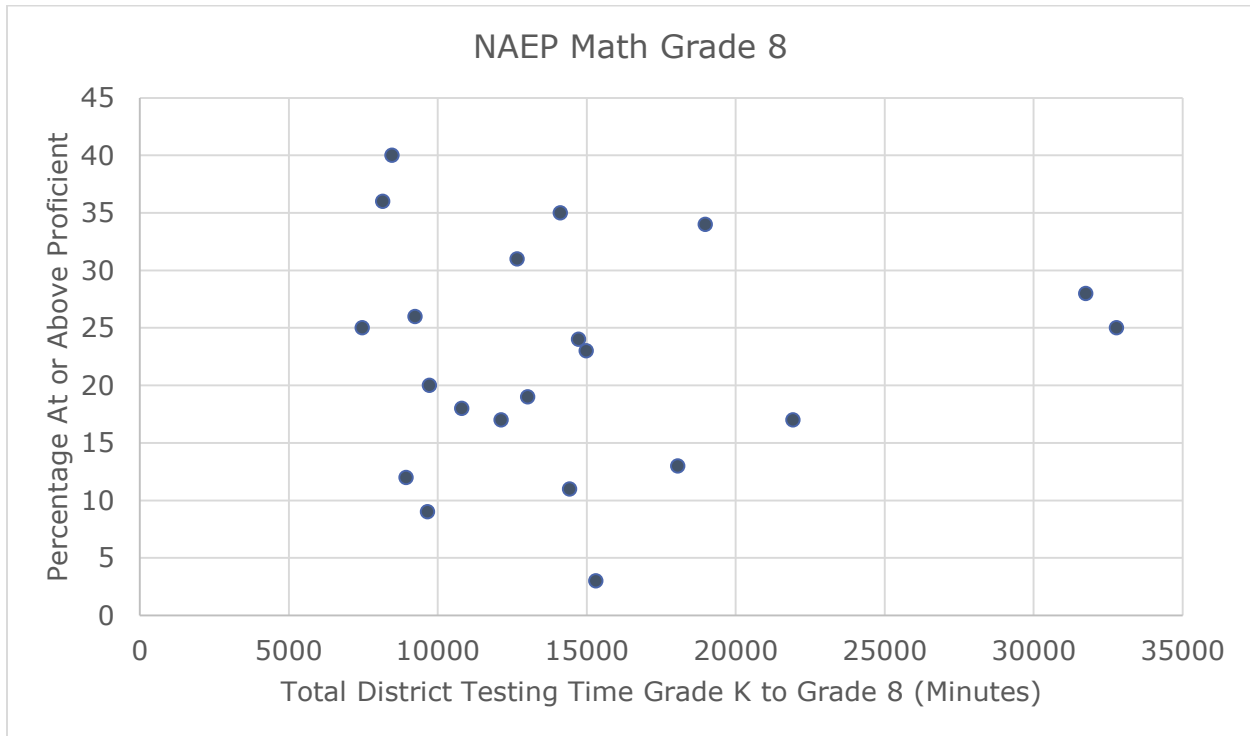
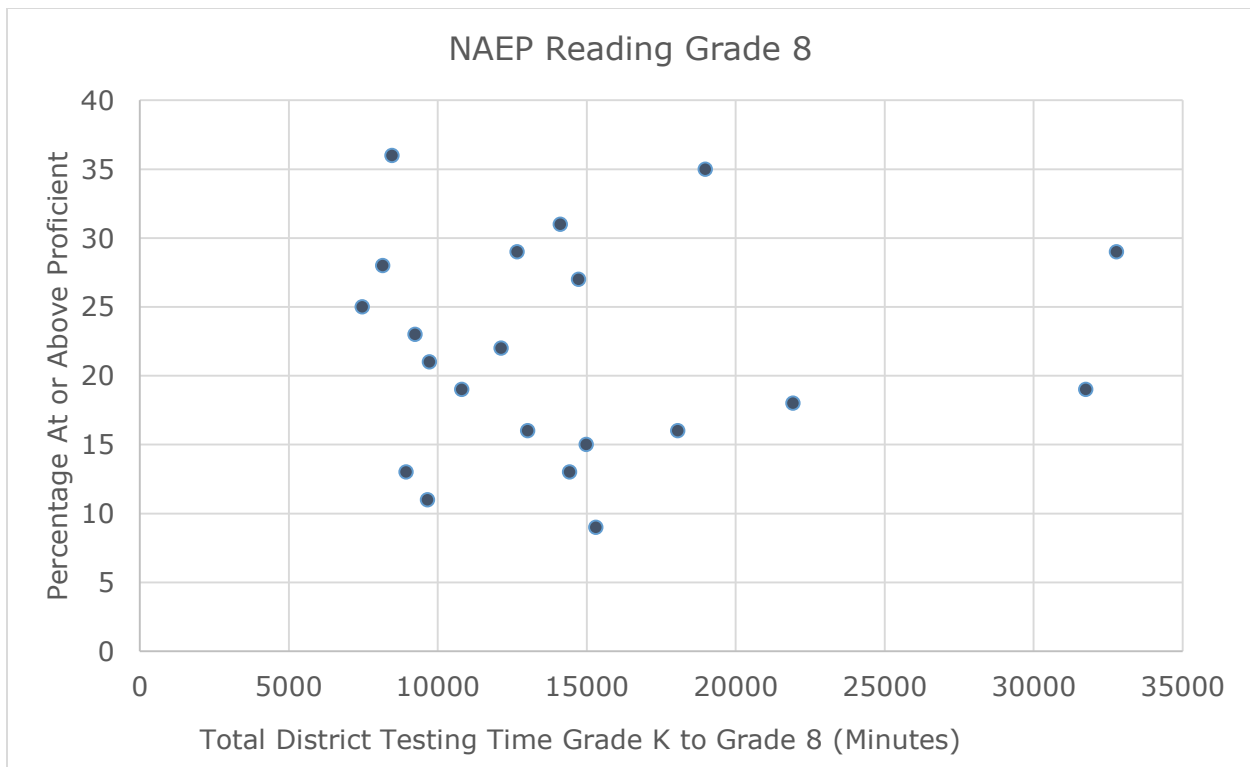


Figure 23. Relationship Between Testing Time in Grades K to 8 and Eighth Grade NAEP Scores in Reading



II. Sample and Optional Assessments

The assessments in this broad category are generally given only to a sample of students (although some may be required) across the district, are optional for students and parents, or are associated with student participation in a particular program.

A. Sample Assessments

Examples of tests in this subcategory include nationally normed assessments and formative assessments that are only given in select schools or to samples of students districtwide.

Prominent among tests in this category is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The test has been given to states on a voluntary basis since the 1970s, but NCLB required that states administer the test in reading and mathematics to a sample of students every two years. In addition, 21 large city school districts have volunteered to be over-sampled in that biannual testing process in order to garner individual district results.²¹ This program was initiated by the Council of the Great City Schools in 2000 and is known as the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). Students in other major city school systems that are not part of TUDA are sampled every two years as part of the regular state administration of NAEP that is required by NCLB.

The Council's research team did not include testing time associated with NAEP because the difference in time between a student selected to participate in NAEP and a student who was not selected for participation is negligible. Testing time on NAEP is generally no more than one hour—including time to complete background questions—on a single day every two years in grades four and eight only. In addition, sample sizes are generally small, except in cases where the TUDA-participating district has an enrollment that requires almost all schools having a fourth and eighth grade to be included. Students are randomly selected for participation in either the reading/English language arts portion or the mathematics portion of the exam (an individual student will not take both exams).

Other norm-referenced exams and formative assessments given on a sample basis include some of the same instruments that we discussed in the previous section, but they are included here when they are given only to some students—typically a sample of students—rather than all students in a designated grade.

In the 2014-15 school year, due to the transition to college- and career-aligned assessments, many districts allowed their schools to decide whether or not they would administer district formative assessments. The research team came to understand through its interviews with districts that many

²¹ TUDA participating cities in 2015 include Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, the District of Columbia, Duval County (Jacksonville), Fresno, Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Jefferson County (Louisville), Los Angeles, Miami-Dade County, New York City, Philadelphia, and San Diego.

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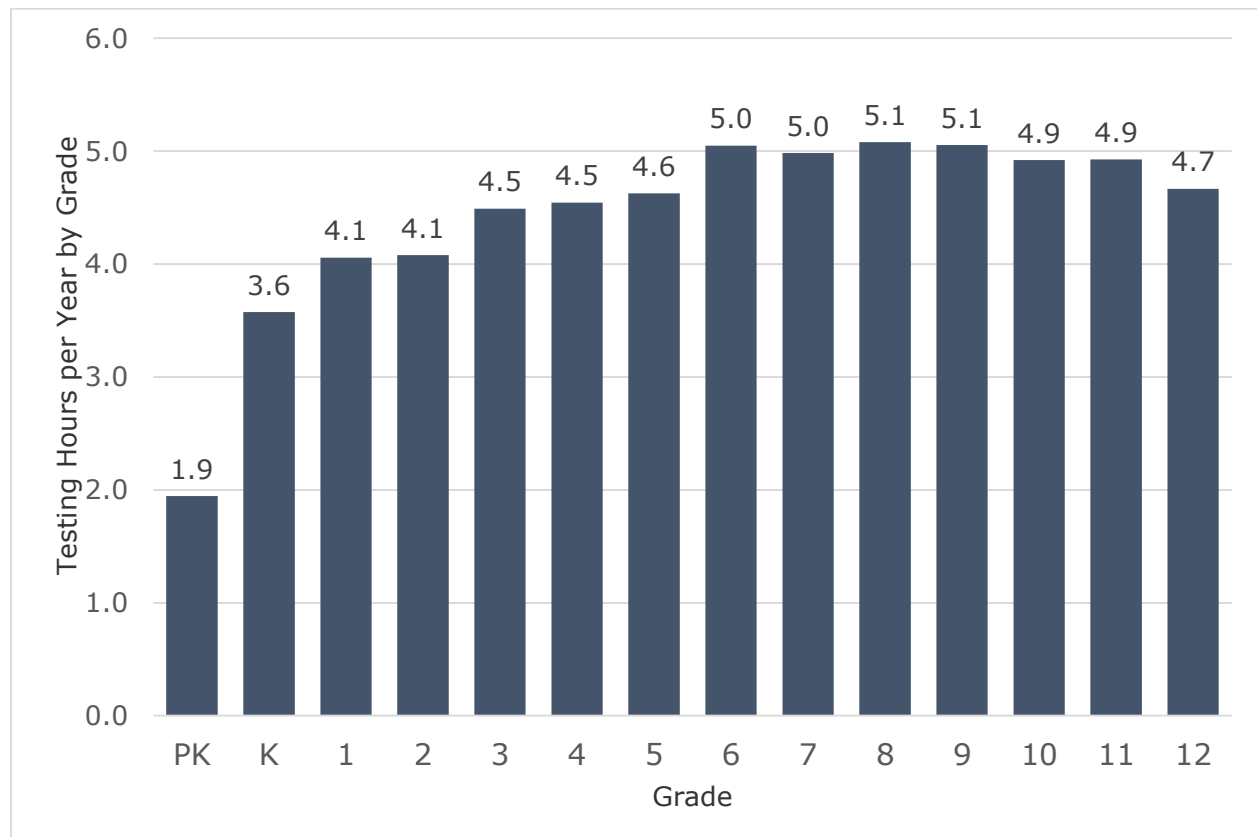
schools continued to use information from old formative assessments despite the possibility that they were misaligned with new standards and summative assessments.

Other assessments in this broad category include assessments that are administered as a result of district or school grant requirements. Many schools administer nationally norm-referenced assessments to students to fulfill requirements for grants and other program evaluations. For example, schools receiving federal Teacher Incentive Fund grants were required to administer a standardized assessment.

This requirement was also sometimes the case with schools falling into the lowest ranking on state accountability systems. Schools identified as the lowest-performing schools were frequently required to participate in testing that higher-performing schools were exempt from using.

The Council gathered data on the amount of time that students participating in these sample tests devoted to taking them. Results indicated that last school year, students taking any of these exams would devote, on average, between 1.9 hours and 5.1 hours to them. (See figure 24.) One must remember, however, that not all students take these tests.

Figure 24. Average Testing Time per Year for School, District, or Grant-Optional Assessments Given Only to Selected Students at Each Grade Level



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B. Optional and Program Assessments

This category includes assessments that are administered based on individual choice or student program participation. This includes gifted and talented identification assessments that are not administered to all students in a grade level but are administered at the request of students, their families, or their teachers. Students electing to take gifted assessments accounted for most of the testing time in grades K through eight (a mean of 3.3 hours per grade level).

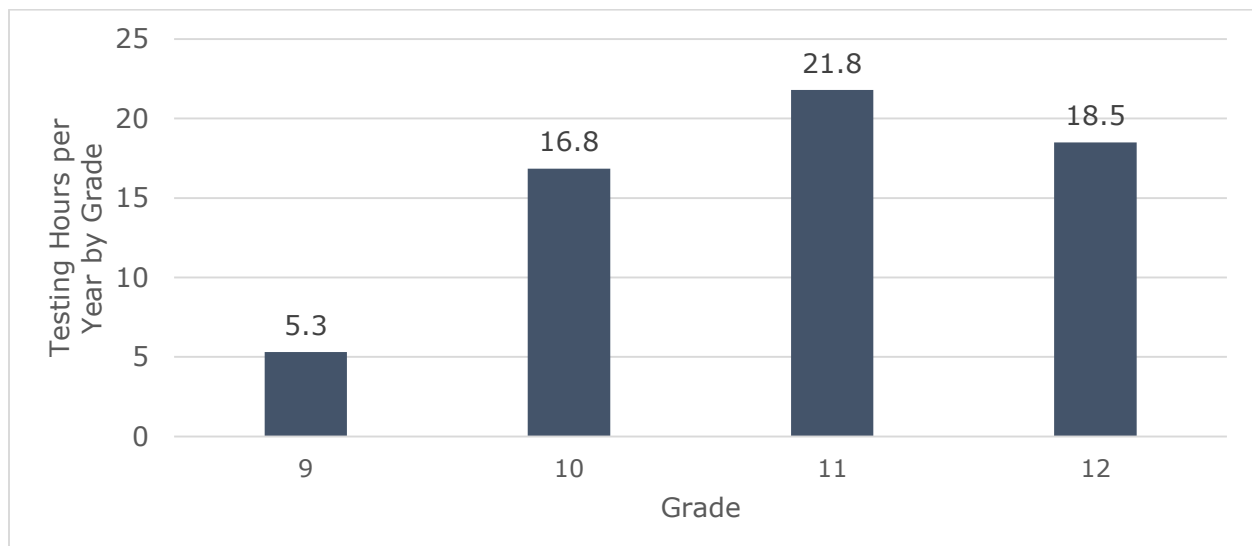
Also included here were high school Advanced Placement (AP) tests, International Baccalaureate (IB) exams, and various Career and Technical Education (CTE) tests that were given to students who chose to enroll in these courses. Tests like AP and IB are typically not required for graduation, although students wanting to go to college will often take these courses and their associated exams. At other times, CTE exams are required. (See subsection below.)

Moreover, PSAT, SAT, ACT, and other college entry exams are included in this category. (When these tests were mandated, we included them in the previous section.) Note that the majority of students will never take all assessments identified in this broad category, but as more students aspire to go to college the more test taking in this category will occur.

1) College Preparation and Entrance Exams

The Council's research team was able to calculate testing time for AP and IB assessments, but we had to make the calculation based on the assumption that students would be taking an average of two AP or IB exams in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Participation rates in AP and IB testing are highest in the eleventh grade when students are hoping to use results as part of their college admission applications. The results indicated that students could devote about 20 hours to these exams in high school on average. (See Figure 25.)

Figure 25. Average Testing Time per Year for Student-Selected Optional Assessments



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Finally, students mostly in grades 10, 11, and 12 will volunteer for such college entrance examinations as the PSAT, the SAT, and the ACT. When these or similar college entrance exams were mandated by a state or school district, we included the time necessary to take these tests in the mandatory section of this report. It was not possible to calculate the exact amount of time devoted to these tests since the decisions to take them and how many times they are taken are typically left to individual students. In addition, many of these assessments are administered on Saturdays and do not always interfere with regular instructional time.

2) Career and Technical Education

High school students across the country often elect to enroll in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs to develop skills or seek career credentials. However, many observers are unfamiliar with the testing that often accompanies these courses and programs. In fact, the Congressional reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) signed into law by President George W. Bush focused substantially on the link between secondary and postsecondary education and on state and local CTE accountability (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

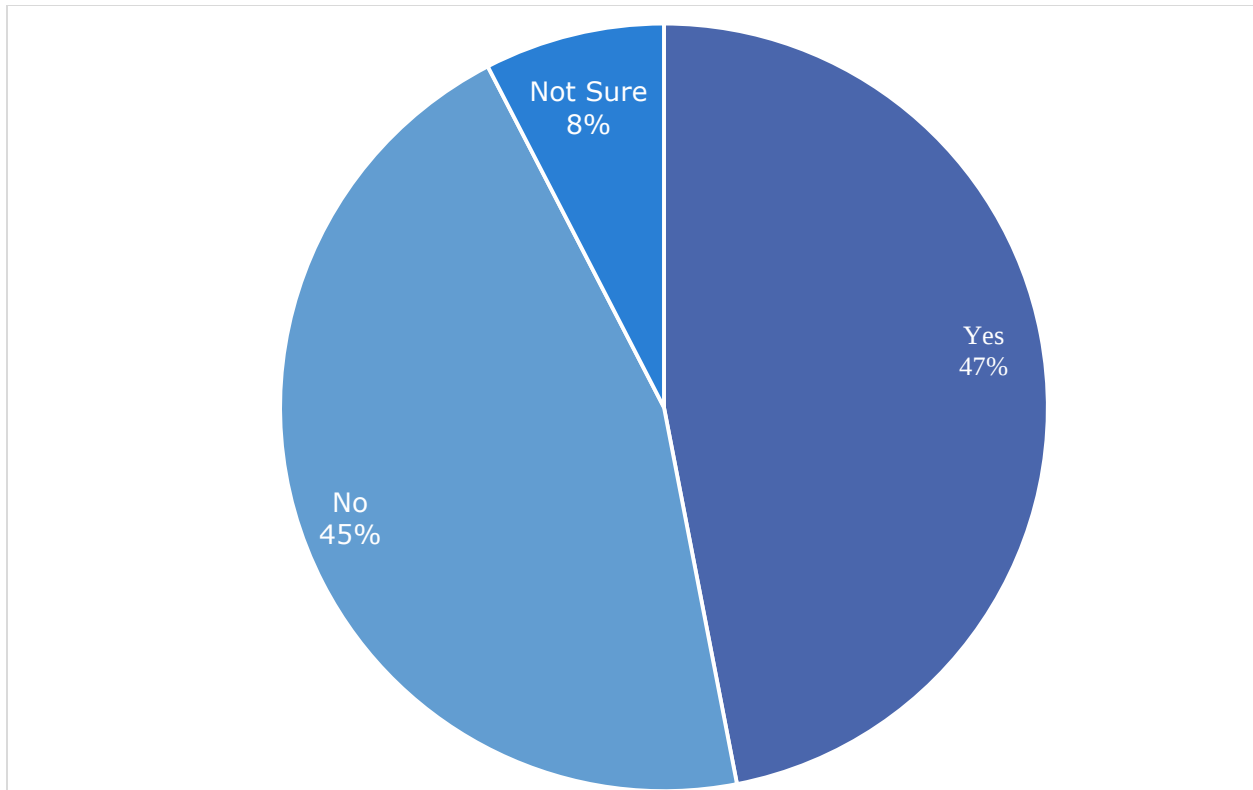
Specifically, Section 113. Accountability of the Act requires state performance “measures of each of the following: (ii) Student attainment of career and technical skill proficiencies, including student achievement on technical assessments, that are aligned with industry-recognized standards...” (p. S.250-14).²² In addition, many states inserted accountability provisions for performance on their CTE exams into their applications for federal NCLB waivers. (See Appendix A.)

Many students are required by their states to take CTE exams if they are taking a CTE course. This requirement can also be in addition to state summative exams and EOC tests in these courses. And about 47 percent of the districts reported that the results of the CTE exams were included in their RTT grants or NCLB waivers. (See Figure 26.)

²² A recent report by the Southern Regional Education Board (April, 2015) challenges states to “design accountability systems that recognize and reward districts, high schools, technology centers, and community and technical colleges” that will double the number of students acquiring postsecondary credentials (p. 7).

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Figure 26. Career and Technical Education Testing Results Included in State Race to the Top or NCLB Waivers



The implementation of these CTE exams varies from state to state. Some states like Iowa do not have a formal state CTE course or assessment. Districts identify assessments for their technical courses on their own. In cases like this, the state provides little or no guidance on the courses or assessments that are required of students. Other states have entered into multi-state collaborative arrangements and have recently begun to develop and administer CTE exams.

In addition, many states now include success on these exams as performance indicators in district and school accountability systems. For example, Georgia has developed a technical-skills attainment inventory (see Appendix C) that has a CTE test associated with every CTE course taught in the state. These assessments are administered to every student in Georgia completing a CTE course or completing a career pathway (i.e., a series of related CTE courses). Examples include the “Emergency Management Institute ‘Are You Ready’ Certification (FEMA),” the “Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Networking Fundamentals,” and “ASE Student Certification Exam: Engine Repair.” Assessment times vary substantially, depending on the nature and extent of the CTE credential. In addition, individual students may follow multiple career paths if they are interested in pursuing them. As a result, estimating testing time for CTE assessments was not feasible, but it can be considerable.

III. Assessments for Special Populations

In addition to the assessments that were described in the previous two sections, school districts use another set of measurement tools that are specific to various student groups. Prominent among these are tests for students with disabilities and assessments for English language learners.

A. Assessments for Special Education

1) *General Education Assessments*

States are required by federal law to assess the academic attainment of students with disabilities along with all other students. A detailed discussion of assessing students with disabilities is beyond the scope of this paper, but considerable research on the topic exists elsewhere. Suffice it to say that equitable access to the core curriculum and the accompanying assessment system for students with disabilities is a critical aspect of a district's decision making around whether, when, and how to provide accommodations in both instruction and testing. To meet both the spirit and letter of the law, it is becoming increasingly critical for a district's large-scale assessments to have the technical features that reflect universal design principles in order to remove barriers.

Most students with disabilities participate in the general education curriculum and spend the majority of their school time in the same classes as their peers without disabilities. More than 60 percent of students with disabilities spend 80 percent of their time in a general education classroom in a regular school with the majority of their instruction provided by a general-education classroom teacher. About 20 percent of students with disabilities spend 40-79 percent of their time in a general education classroom. And approximately 10 percent of all students with disabilities have significant cognitive impairments (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) and spend less than 40 percent of their time in a general education setting.

As the number of English Language Learners rises, the number of students who are ELLs and also have a disability increases, and they have presented special challenges for schools. Nationally, the percentage of ELLs with disabilities is almost eight percent of all public school students with disabilities (National Center on Educational Outcomes, 2011)—although their numbers can range from negligible to over 28 percent of students receiving special education services, depending on the locale.

The participation of all children in a district's educational assessment system, particularly when it is used for accountability purposes, has pushed educators and policymakers alike to think about how students with disabilities can effectively participate in instruction and assessments in ways that lessen the barriers that their disabilities may have created, while promoting learning and producing valid assessment results at the same time (Bolt & Roach, 2009; Davies & Dempsey, 2011; Laitusis & Cook, 2007; Thurlow, 2015; Thurlow, Lazarus, & Christensen, 2013). It has also pushed educators to ensure that a student's disabilities do not interfere with their learning of critical knowledge or demonstrating that knowledge on a standardized assessment.

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Generally, there are four main ways students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments:

- General assessments, without accommodations
- General assessments, with accommodations
- Alternate assessments based on grade-level achievement standards
- Alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS)

Students with disabilities also participate in general assessments beyond the state tests their districts administer, including NAEP; district, school, teacher-made tests; and tests used for special education eligibility evaluations and triennial evaluations. In the past, students with disabilities, ELLs, and ELLs with disabilities were provided access to all these general assessments only through accommodations, but recent attention has been devoted to universally designed assessments as a way of increasing access by modifying the assessments themselves (Thurlow & Kopriva, 2015).

For instance, new technology-based assessments provide students with access to content through such features as—

- Universal accessibility features like zoom and highlighting that are either embedded in the assessment and available to all students taking the test, or features that are not embedded but are provided *via* a teacher or test administrator.
- Designated accessibility features (such as embedded text or speech for some content or a picture dictionary) or non-embedded features (such as read aloud or bilingual dictionaries) that are available to any student. These features should be determined before testing so that they can be available to the student.
- Accommodations, either embedded or non-embedded, which include changes in testing materials or procedures in a way that allows students with disabilities or ELLs to show their knowledge and skills. One example would be a human sign-language interpreter for an ELL with a hearing impairment who does not use American Sign Language.

Both state testing consortia—the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced)—have developed general education assessments that use a three-level approach to accessibility. PARCC includes (a) accessibility features for all students, (b) accessibility features that are identified in advance, and (c) accommodations. Smarter Balanced includes (a) universal tools for all students, (b) designated supports for students with documented needs, and (c) accommodations. Although similar in structure, the approaches used by the two consortia differ in their approaches to students with disabilities and ELLs. Smarter Balanced allows accommodations only for students with disabilities (those with IEPs and those with 504 accommodation plans), moving features such as translations into designated supports, while PARCC identifies several accommodations for ELLs.

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The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which oversees NAEP, has worked to make test participation more representative of the nation's public school enrollment, particularly among students with disabilities and ELLs. One focus of that work has been on "who to include," so results can be compared across jurisdictions. And a second focus for NAEP has been on "how to include" these students. This latter question has involved how students with disabilities and ELLs can access the test meaningfully and validly using accommodations that are properly selected, administered, and monitored.

Despite the challenges that NAEP has faced creating consistent policies across states, the 2013 state report noted that the National Center for Educational Statistics (2013) had made considerable progress reducing the number of special populations excluded from its assessments. For example, in its eighth-grade reading assessment, the exclusion rate for students with disabilities decreased from 31 percent in 1998 to 15 percent in 2013. Among ELLs, the exclusion rate dropped from 29 percent in 1998 to 10 percent in 2013. Still, there is considerable variability among states in exclusion rates, something that is generally attributed to differences in accommodation policies (Gerwertz, 2013).

Participation and Accommodation

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)* requires that students receiving special education services participate in statewide and districtwide assessments. A few students with the most significant disabilities take alternate assessments.

The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* also requires that all students, including those receiving special education services, must be included in the assessments used for Title I accountability. On large-scale assessments used for Title I accountability (i.e., state tests) most students with disabilities participate in the general assessment with or without accommodations. Federal requirements allow up to one percent of all students to be counted as proficient using an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards.

2) *Special Education Eligibility Evaluations and Other Assessments*

Students thought to need special education services may be given a number of other assessments during the school year in order to determine or pinpoint individual needs. Once a student has been identified as eligible for special education services, an assessment cycle, which includes a re-evaluation at least every three years, begins. Initial assessments can call for a full battery of tools to identify the nature of the problem, but subsequent testing is often limited to a student's identified disability. It is permissible for a parent and the school district to agree that there is sufficient information about a child to nullify the need for some formal re-evaluations.

Federal law (IDEIA, 2004) calls for assessments in eight main areas as part of the eligibility process: health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic

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performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.²³ To diagnose any of the 13 identified disabilities,²⁴ school districts have fairly wide discretion over what battery of tests they administer, but federal regulations indicate that no single measure or assessment should be used as the sole criterion for determining whether a child has a disability or is in need of services.²⁵ IDEA specifically states—

To ensure that underachievement in a child suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to inappropriate, inadequate, or unavailable instruction in reading or math, the district must consider, as part of the evaluation described in 34 CFR 300.304 through 300.306, the following—

- Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and
- Documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessments of student progress during instruction.

States that use Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) (or Response to Intervention [RTI]) will include different assessment tools for students being evaluated for specific learning disabilities or other disabilities than will states that do not use MTSS.

A wide range of assessment tools are administered as part of the traditional special education evaluation process. Some major assessments are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Sample Assessments Used for Special Education Eligibility and Re-evaluation

Reading	Math
• Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing • DIBELS • Kaufman Test of Education Achievement • Woodcock-Johnson Reading Mastery Test • Peabody Individual Achievement Test	• Brigance Diagnostic Inventories • Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children 2nd Edition (KABC II) • Kaufman Scales of Early Academic and Language • Peabody Individual Achievement Test • Stanford Test of Academic Skills • Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement
Written Language	Behavior
• Oral and Written Language Skills • Test of Written Language	• Behavior Assessment System for Children • Connors Rating Scale

²³ Section 300.304 Evaluation Procedures. (c)(4). “The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor skills.

²⁴ Autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic disabilities, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairments

²⁵ Section 330.304 Evaluation Procedures. (b)(2).

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• Standards-Based Assessment (SBA) • Wechsler Non-verbal • Peabody Individual Achievement Test	• Bateria III
Communications • CASL • CELF-Preschool • Clinical Assessment of Articulation and Phonology • Comprehensive Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary Test • Kaufman Speech Praxis Test • Test of Adolescent Language	Social Emotional • Bateria III • Differential Ability Scales • Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children • Wechsler Non-verbal
Functional Living Skills • Adaptive Behavioral Inventory for Children • Denver Developmental Screening Test • Scales of Independent Behavior • Vineland Adaptive Behavior Skills • Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children	Oral Expression • Kaufman Scales of Early Academic Language • Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English • Bateria III • Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement
Listening Comprehension • Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English • Khan-Lewis Phonological Analysis • Wechsler Non-verbal	Motor Skills • Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration • Motor Free Visual Perception Test • Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency • Peabody Developmental Motor Scales

In reviewing the literature, we were able to find several estimates that said the average testing time for a psychological evaluation of a student is about three to four hours.²⁶ This time often varies based on the age, grade level, and disability of the student, with preschool and kindergarten students taking up to three hours, first grade through age sixteen taking about four hours, and students aged sixteen or older taking as much as five hours to complete an evaluation.²⁷ (Other types of evaluations may require differing lengths of time.) These estimated times, however, have not been added to the testing time of other assessments in this study because of the dedicated nature and purposes of these instruments.

²⁶ See, for example, Camara, W. J., Nathan, J. S., & Puente, A. E. (2000). Psychological test usage: Implications in professional psychology. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 31(2), 141-154. doi: 10.1037//0735-7028.31.2.141

²⁷ Clarity: The Speech Hearing and Learning Center. Psychology frequently asked questions. Retrieved from <http://www.clarityupstate.org/frequently-asked-questions-learning>

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B. Assessments for ELLs

States are also required by federal law to adopt an English language proficiency assessment to determine when English learners are ready to exit language support services. Still, states have considerable discretion over the terms of those exits and what exams they will require their districts to administer.

These assessments are given by local school districts once a year and typically require less than two hours per student, depending on the test and the numbers of domains tested (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Examples of the most commonly administered English language proficiency tests include Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs (ACCESS), the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA), and Language Assessment Scales Links (LAS). In addition, some districts require their own assessments. A breakdown of which city school systems administer what English language proficiency assessments is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Tests Used to Assess English Language Proficiency, 2014-15

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS)—Total testing time about 145 minutes across all four domains)	
• Albuquerque • Anchorage • Atlanta • Baltimore City • Birmingham • Boston • Charlotte-Mecklenburg • Charleston • Chicago • Clark County • Denver • Detroit • District of Columbia • Guilford County (NC) • Honolulu • Indianapolis	• Jackson • Jefferson County (KY) • Kansas City (MO) • Milwaukee • Minneapolis • Nashville • Newark • Norfolk • Oklahoma City • Philadelphia • Pittsburgh • Providence • Richmond • Shelby County (TN) • St. Louis • St. Paul
English Language Development Assessment (ELDA)—Total testing time between 160 and 170 minutes	LAS Links—(Total testing time between 95 and 155 minutes)
• Des Moines • East Baton Rouge • Omaha	• Bridgeport

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State-developed English Language Proficiency Assessments
California English Language Development Test (CELDT)—(Test is untimed but typically takes about 120 minutes.) • Fresno • Long Beach • Los Angeles • Oakland • San Diego • Santa Ana
Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) • Broward County • Duval County • Miami-Dade County • Orange County • Palm Beach County
• Wichita—Kansas English Language Proficiency Exam (KELPA)
New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)—(Test is untimed but typically takes between 50-70 minutes.) • Buffalo • New York City • Rochester
Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA)—(Test typically takes between 115-140 minutes.) • Cincinnati • Cleveland • Columbus • Dayton • Toledo
• Portland—English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)
Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment (TELPAS) • Austin • Dallas • El Paso • Fort Worth • Houston
• Seattle—Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WLPA)

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English learners are also required under NCLB to take reading and math tests in grades three through eight and once in high school, like all other students. The vast majority of states administer their NCLB-required assessments in English. However, the U.S. Department of Education has ruled that newly arrived students can be exempted from one administration of the state's ELA test.²⁸

Some districts, moreover, recognize that testing ELL student proficiency in the various content areas in English can yield questionable determinations of student skills and knowledge in those subjects. Consequently, some districts administer assessments in Spanish or other native languages using assessments such as “Logramos,” designed to mirror the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, or “Aprenda,” modeled after the Stanford 10. Many districts use these assessments in place of the nationally normed assessment that is typically given to general education students. And they will sometimes use these versions of the norm-referenced exams as part of their dual language programming. The Council research team did not count these assessments as additional assessments if the general population took a similar assessment in English—although we know of some districts that give both to the same ELLs.

Finally, districts administer a “Home Language Survey” to determine whether a student is living in a household where English is not the predominant language spoken. These instruments are typically required by the states, although most do not mandate a particular form of the surveys.^{29,30} Usually, these instruments consist of a handful of questions that are asked of parents—not students—as part of an intake interview or process.

²⁸ 34 CFR Part 200, RIN 1810-AA97. “Under proposed Sec. 200.6(b)(4), a State would be able to exempt ‘recently arrived LEP students’ from one administration of the State’s reading/language arts assessment. Proposed Sec. 200.6(b)(4)(i) would define a recently arrived LEP student as a LEP student who has attended schools in the United States (not including Puerto Rico) for less than 10 months.” (May 2007)

²⁹ English Language Learners in America's Great City Schools: Demographics, Achievement, and Staffing. (2013). Washington, D.C.; Council of the Great City Schools

³⁰ Alison L. Bailey and Kimberly R. Kelly. “The Use and Validity of Home Language Surveys in State English Language Proficiency Assessment Systems: A Review and Issues Perspective,” The Evaluation of English Language Proficiency Assessments Project. UCLA, July 2010. The white paper identifies Louisiana, Nebraska, and South Dakota as three states that do not mandate the use of an HLS but rather only recommend its use.

IV. Looking at Testing in the District Context

A. Most Frequently Administered Tests

The analyses of testing in the Great City Schools indicated that the most commonly administered exams in the 66 districts on which we had data included the ACT, the SAT, and ACCESS—all of which are optional or are special-population tests. A summary is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Most Commonly Administered Assessments in the Great City Schools

Name of Assessment	Number of Districts in Which Assessment Is Given
NAEP	66 districts
ACT	61 districts
ACT Plan	17 districts
ACT Explore	8 districts
SAT	53 districts
PSAT	45 districts
SAT Readiness	8 districts
ACCESS	34 districts
DIBELS	20 districts
SBAC	17 districts
NWEA MAP	17 districts
PARCC	15 districts
ITBS	13 districts
FitnessGram ³¹	13 districts
SRI	12 districts
DRA	8 districts
STAR	8 districts

B. Testing Portfolio in the Average Urban School District

The Council collected the testing calendars for all 66 districts included in this report. Many calendars are quite similar to one another except for the names of the tests and the number of times they are given. An example of a typical assessment calendar is the testing calendar from Hillsborough County (Tampa) for the 2014-15 school year, shown in Table 6 below.³² This

³¹ FitnessGram is a physical fitness exam that is required by some states and administered voluntarily by some districts.

³² Material from 2014-15, K-12 Testing Calendar, Hillsborough County Public Schools

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calendar was also selected because Hillsborough County has a fully developed system for assessing teachers in non-tested grades and subjects.

Table 6. Testing Portfolio and Calendar for Hillsborough County, 2014-15

Test	Grades	First Day of Test Window	State Statute or Rule
Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screening (FLKRS)	K	August 19, 2014	§1002.69
Postsecondary Educational Readiness Test (PERT)	11-12	August 19, 2014	§1008.30
Math Formative/Diagnostic Test 1	3-5	August 25, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
Kindergarten Readiness Test (KRT)	K	August 25, 2014	§1002.69
Writing Formative/Diagnostic Test	6-8	August 25, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
Science Formative/Diagnostic Test	5	August 25, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
Science Formative/Diagnostic Test	6-8	August 26, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
Writing Formative/Diagnostic Test	9-11	August 26, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
FitnessGram	2 and 5	September 2, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.609811 for required schools
Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading (FAIR)	K-10	September 2, 2014	§1002.69/6A-6.6053
Fall Administration of EOC—US History, Biology, Algebra I, Geometry		September 15, 2014	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
Fall Pretests—Credit-Earning Courses	7-12	September 16, 2014	§1008.22
FCAT 2.0 Reading and Math Retakes	Retained 10-12	October 6, 2014	§1008.22
Math Formative/Diagnostic Test	6-8	October 13, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Math Benchmark Formative/Diagnostic Test A	High School	October 13, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools

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ReadiStep	7	October 15, 2015	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
PSAT	9-11	October 15, 2014	§1007.35
ELA Interim Assessment	2-5	October 21, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Writing Formative/Diagnostic Test	6-8	November 4, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Math Formative/Diagnostic Test 2	3-5	November 10, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Social Studies Formative/Diagnostic Test—U.S. History (Regular and Honors)		November 10, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Science Formative/Diagnostic Test	5 and 8	December 1, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Writing Formative/Diagnostic Test	9-11	December 1, 2014	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Personal Fitness Exam	Select	December 1, 2014	§1008.22
Winter Administration of EOC--US History, Biology, Algebra I, Geometry		December 1, 2014	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
FSA English Language Arts Writing Component Field Test	Select	December 1, 2014	§1008.22
Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading (FAIR)	K-10	December 1, 2014	§1002.69/6A-6.053
FitnessGram	6-8	December 1, 2014	
ELA Interim Assessment	2-5	January 12, 2015	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Mid-year and Semester Exams	6-12	January 13, 2015	§1008.22
NAEP/TUDA--Sample	4 and 8	January 26, 2015	§1008.22 selected sites
Math Formative/Diagnostic Test 3	3-5	February 16, 2015	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Spring Pretests—Credit-Earning Courses	7-12	February 17, 2015	§1008.22

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Florida Alternate Assessment	3-11	February 23, 2015	§1008.22
SAT	11	February 25, 2015	§1008.22
Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)	4-11	March 2, 2015	§1008.22
Comprehensive English Language Learner Assessment (CELLA)	K-12 ELLs	March 2, 2015	Rule 6A-6.0902
Science Formative/Diagnostic Tests—Biology		March 16, 2015	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Social Studies Formative/Diagnostic Test—U.S. History (Regular and Honors)		March 16, 2015	§1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
Stanford 10	1-2	March 23, 2015	§1008.22
Math Formative/Diagnostic Test B	6-8	March 23, 2015	1008.33/6A-6.6099811 for required schools
FCAT 2.0 Reading and Math Retakes & Retained	10-12	March 23, 2015	§1008.22
Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)—ELA/Math—paper based	3-4	March 23, 2015	§1008.22
Algebra EOC Retakes	10	March 30, 2015	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading (FAIR)	K-8	April 6, 2015	§1002.69
Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)	5-8 math 5-11 ELA	April 13, 2015	§1008.22
FCAT 2.0 Science	5 and 8	April 13, 2015	§1008.22
Stanford 10 Abbreviated	3	April 14, 2015	§1008.25
Biology EOC (FSA)		April 20, 2015	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
Algebra II EOC (FSA)		April 27, 2015	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
Geometry EOC (FSA)		May 4, 2015	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
KRT Post-test Kindergarten	K	May 1, 2015	§1008.22
FitnessGram Post-test	2 and 5-8	May 1, 2015	
Algebra I EOC (FSA)		May 11, 2015	§1008.22 and 1003.4282
Art, Music, PE, Dance District Assessment	1-5	May 1, 2015	§1008.22

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International Baccalaureate (IB) Testing	11-12	May 4, 2015	\$1003.4295
Personal Fitness Exam	Select	May 4, 2015	\$1008.22
Advanced Placement (AP) Exams	9-12	May 4, 2015	\$1003.4295
Biology EOC (FSA)		April 20, 2015	\$1008.22 and 1003.4282
End of Year Math-Kindergarten	K	May 11, 2015	\$1008.22
End of Year Science	K-4	May 11, 2015	\$1008.22
Civics EOC (NGSSS)	7	May 18, 2015	\$1008.22
US History EOC (NGSSS)	9-12	May 18, 2015	\$1008.22 and 1003.4282
End of Year and Semester Exams	6-11, 12	June 1, 2015	\$1008.22
ACT		9/13, 10/25, 10/26, 12/13, 12/14, 2/7, 4/18, 4/19, 6/13, 6/14	Optional
SAT		10/11, 11/8, 12/6, 1/24, 3/14, 5/2, 6/6	Optional

C. Student Testing Experience in High- and Low-Testing Urban School Districts

In addition, the Council determined the district whose mandatory testing time was one of the highest of the 66 districts on which we had data and the district that was one of the lowest in mandatory testing time. The district with one of the highest amounts of mandatory testing time was Detroit, and the district with one of the lowest amounts was St. Paul.

The research team created a sample third-grade student who was an ELL and estimated what their testing experience might look like over the course of the 2014-15 school year. Neither one of these two districts administers EOC exams, formative assessments, or SLOs. The results are shown in Tables 7-9 below.

Table 7. Example of Testing Experience of a Sample ELL Third Grader in High and Low Testing Districts

St. Paul (Low Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	ELA Math	90 minutes	180 minutes
ELL Assessment	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes

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Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)	1	Full test battery	200 minutes	200 minutes
Optional Local Purpose Assessment (OLPA)	1	Reading Math	60 minutes	120 minutes
Total				650 minutes or 10.8 hours or 1.0%
Detroit (High Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	ELA Math	210 minutes	420 minutes
ELL Assessment	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes
NWEA MAP	3	ELA Reading Math Science	60 minutes	720 minutes
STAR	3	ELA Reading Math	60 minutes	540 minutes
Total				1,830 minutes or 30.5 hours or 2.8%

Table 8. Example of Testing Experience of Sample ELL Eighth Grader in High and Low Testing Districts

St. Paul (Low Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	ELA Math	90 minutes	180 minutes

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ELL Assessment (Sample)	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes
ACT Explore	1	ELA Reading Math Science	30 minutes	120 minutes
Optional Local Purpose Assessment (OLPA)	1	Reading Math	60 minutes	120 minutes
Total				650 minutes or 10.8 hours or 1.0%
Detroit (High Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	ELA Math Social Studies	240 minutes (ELA) 210 minutes (Math) 100 minutes (Social Studies)	550 minutes
ELL Assessment (Sample)	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes
NWEA MAP	3	ELA Reading Math Science	60 minutes	720 minutes
STAR	3	ELA Reading Math	60 minutes	540 minutes
High School Placement Test	1	Reading Math Science	50 minutes	150 minutes
Districtwide World Language	1	Language Proficiency	180 minutes	180 minutes

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Proficiency Exam				
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Sample)	1	Reading or Math	60 minutes	60 minutes
Total				2,350 minutes or 39.2 hours or 3.6%

Table 9. Example of Testing Experience of Sample ELL Eleventh Grader Who Is Taking a CTE and/or AP Exam in High and Low Testing Districts

St. Paul (Low Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	Math Science	90 minutes	180 minutes
ELL Assessment (Sample)	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes
ACT	1	English Reading Math Science Writing	215 minutes	215 minutes
Accuplacer	1	Reading Math Writing	60 minutes	180 minutes
GRAD	1	Math	60 minutes	60 minutes
AP (Sample & Typical Subjects)	1	History Science	180 minutes	360 minutes

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Total				1,145 minutes or 19.1 hours or 1.8%
Detroit (High Testing District)				
Test	Times per Year	Subjects	Time per Test	Total Testing Time
State NCLB Test	1	ELA Math Social Studies Science	270 minutes (ELA) 240 minutes (Math) 50 minutes (Science) 50 minutes (Social Studies)	610 minutes
ELL Assessment (Sample)	1	English language proficiency	150 minutes	150 minutes
Work Keys/ Work Skills		Career and Technical Education	135 minutes	135 minutes
PSAT		Verbal and analytic skills	150 minutes	150 minutes
NWEA MAP	3	ELA Reading Math Science	60 minutes	720 minutes
STAR	3	ELA Reading Math	60 minutes	540 minutes
ACT	1	English Math Reading Science Writing	215 minutes	215 minutes
AP (Sample and Typical)	1	History Science	180 minutes	360 minutes

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Total				2,880 minutes or 48.0 hours or 4.4%
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D. Putting Testing Time in Context

There are no standards *per se* for gauging whether the nation's urban school systems test too much, test too little, or conduct about the right amount of testing. As shown previously in Figure 3, the amount of time students spend taking mandatory tests constitutes a surprisingly low percentage (2.34 percent) of the overall time they spend in school given the amount of controversy this issue has generated. At the same time, there are clearly a considerable number of tests, and these tests often pile up at critical points during the school year. But how much is too much, and where is this tipping point?

While it is not possible to apply benchmarks to what we found in this study, we can compare the testing done in urban districts nationwide with other activities and other countries. A year ago, the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE, 2015) published a report called *Fixing Our National Accountability System* in which author Marc Tucker argued that the U.S. testing system was unique, compared with other countries, in its use of standardized test scores to assess teacher and administrator performance. It follows that the United States was the only country studied where exams were mandated for all students in grades three through eight and once in high school.

By way of comparison, Tucker presented data on the frequency with which top performing countries test students. His research indicated that the countries he studied³³ were most likely to test their students in grades six, nine, and 11. Most tests in those grades were in math, reading or language, and science, but they sometimes also included civics, geography, and social studies. Often these tests were administered for diagnostic purposes or for gauging a student's readiness for higher levels of work. The number of tests in the sixth grade typically included assessments in two or three subjects, while testing in grade nine involved anywhere from two to eight subjects. Finally, testing in the 11th, 12th, or 13th grades could involve exams in three to as many as ten subjects. Again, in comparison, the average student in the U.S. districts studied typically took eight standardized tests a year every year between pre-k and grade 12.

The NCEE report provides no data on the amount of time these tests take, but the report does conclude that the U.S. conducts more testing and uses student assessment results for differing purposes than other countries. Tucker's underlying claim is that our test-based accountability system has had negative consequences for U.S. schools, teachers, and students. Yet this finding alone does not suggest that the lower levels of testing in these other countries cause these nations

³³ Countries or cities included Ontario, Canada; Shanghai, China; Estonia; Finland; Hong Kong; Japan; Korea; Poland; Singapore; Taiwan; and the United States.

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to produce higher academic performance, or that the higher levels of testing in the U.S. result in lower international test results.

Another way to put testing time into context is to compare the amount of time students devote to testing to other school-based activities that students engage in. For instance, a student in the eleventh grade who is on the football team might spend as much as 48 hours taking mandated assessments over the course of the school year, but could spend some 84 hours at football practice between mid-August and the end of November (assuming six hours of practice a week for three and a half months). In this context, the amount of time the student may spend taking tests doesn't seem so high, unless one considers that this 11th grader might also be taking optional AP tests in multiple subjects.

Similarly, elementary and middle school field trips typically take one school day (three to four hours at the site plus lunch and transportation time).³⁴ The annual testing time of approximately 4.22 days is equivalent to about four student field trips annually. A survey of elementary, middle and high school teachers in Clark County showed that 35 percent of teachers take two or more field trips per year and another 37 percent took at least one trip per year.³⁵ We did find examples, however, of schools that provided up to 16 field trips per year for its average student.³⁶

E. Examples of Districts that Are Reducing Testing

Over the last several years, many of the districts examined in this study have reduced the number of tests they administer mostly on their own. The narrative below describes examples.

- *Boston*—In 2014-15, the district moved to decrease the number of predictive pre-post tests administered by the district; it reduced the number of schools that would have to give a formative assessment based on the district's scope and sequence; and it cut the number of grade K-2 assessments from two to one. Most of the reductions applied to schools that are making substantial academic progress.
- *Dallas*—In 2015-16, the district is eliminating its K-2 non-core testing and one administration of its performance tests. In addition, the district will be reducing all second-semester tests where there is a state test administered. This will be a reduction of 47 tests.
- *District of Columbia*—In 2014-15, the district convened an assessment task force of parents, students, teachers, and principals. A number of changes resulted. First, the district made some modest changes in the grade levels at which it administers some assessments. For example, the district in 2015-16 won't administer DIBELS beyond third grade once students reach the "ceiling" performance level. Similarly, the district won't administer TRC exams once the "ceiling" performance level is reached. Second, in an attempt to better involve

³⁴ See, for example, Discovery World in Milwaukee, WI. Retrieved from http://cdn.discoveryworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/14SEPT_Educator-Guide_Elementary.pdf

³⁵ Brody, A. (2006). Clark County School District Attitudes, Perceptions, Barriers, and Desires for Field Trip Experiences. 1-28. Available at: http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/pli_environment_education/2

³⁶ Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/practice/learning-expeditions-rethinking-field-trips>

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teachers in the assessment process, the district brought middle school social studies teachers together to create an end-of-course assessment for U.S. history. Third, the district created an Office of Instructional Practice that will provide regular, ongoing feedback to teachers using formative assessment data while also reviewing instructional practice. Finally, the district is working to demystify its assessments by revising its elementary school report cards to provide more understandable information about each student's reading level and recommend appropriate books for that reading level. The district also uses its home visits as an opportunity for teachers to explain to parents what their child's progress on assessments looks like.

- *Duval County* (Jacksonville)—In 2015-16, the district significantly reduced the number assessments for students compared to the 2014-15 school year. At the elementary level, the number of required district assessments went from 23 to 10 (seven of which were required by the state for teacher evaluation purposes) and at the secondary level tests were reduced from 29 to 12 (four of which are required by the state for evaluation purposes).
- *Fresno*—In 2014-15, the district established an Assessment Council comprised of 25 teachers, eight principals and three central office staff and charged it with delineating state and federally mandated assessments, district-facilitated assessments, and classroom-level assessments, along with the frequency of administration. The Council researched formative and summative assessments, studied best practices, investigated online interim assessments, and examined the current assessment system and its impact on student and teacher testing time. Recommendations resulted in limiting the number of assessments to four windows a year, reducing the number of reading comprehension assessments from three to two, moving math fluency tests from four times a year to a site-based choice, omitting ELDA testing, and making SBAC interim assessments optional.
- *Hillsborough County*—In 2010-11, the district eliminated testing in grades three through 10 on the SAT-10 and reduced testing time in grades one and two. In 2011-12, the district eliminated end-of-year tests in math, science, and writing in grades one through five. The district also eliminated semester exams in courses with a required state EOC. It also made formative reading exams optional, thus eliminating four sessions of classroom testing. For 2015-16, the district is eliminating Readiness in grade seven. Pursuant to state legislation, the district no longer requires the PSAT, SAT, and ACT for every student. The district used results from already-administered exams to meet state requirements to evaluate teachers. Examples included kindergarten teacher use of the DRA, EELP-teacher use of the Battelle Inventory to monitor progress on IEP goals, and multiple uses of semester exams.
- *Houston*—In the new school year (2015-16), the district eliminated the norm-referenced testing (ITBS), and it eliminated all district-provided benchmarks at the beginning and middle of the year.
- *Jackson*—In the 2014-2015 school year, the district's testing calendar had 169 school days set aside for testing; in the 2015-16 school year, the district had 154 days set aside for testing.
- *Miami-Dade County*—In 2014-15, the district eliminated 24 district-developed benchmark assessments. In spring 2015, the district eliminated nearly all of its 300 district-developed

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EOCs pursuant to HB 7069 signed by the governor. Some 23 EOC exams in elementary school, 69 EOC exams in middle school, and 180 EOC exams in high school were eliminated. Compared to last year, the district requires only four total tests beyond those required by federal and state governments.

- *Milwaukee*—In 2014-15, the district issued a request for proposals for its Universal Screening Assessments. The district was able to find an assessment that saved over 3.5 hours of testing time per child. The new assessment is both a universal screener and a progress monitor, and it saves teachers data entry time because results do not have to be recorded in another product. The district also requested to have its French and German Immersion students in grades K4-2nd were waived from the early literacy assessment required by the state. The result is that students will be tested three hours less per year, than in the previous school years at participating schools. The waiver also includes K4 Spanish bilingual students.
- *Minneapolis*—In 2015-16, the district is scaling back on benchmark and quarterly interim testing in grades kindergarten through grade 10 in math, ELA, social studies, visual arts, music, media, physical education, health, as well as geometry, algebra, geography, physical science, world history, and economics/government.
- *Orange County (Orlando)*—In 2014-15, the district eliminated 42 summative assessments in elementary grades. Some 34 other benchmark assessments were eliminated, and more extensive professional development on the use of formative assessments was put in their place. In 2013-14, the district eliminated about half of its benchmark assessments.
- *Rochester*—In the 2013-2014 school year, the Rochester City School District used locally created post-assessments as part of the APPR process for teachers with SLOs. All students in courses and grades who were not covered by state assessments were asked to sit for post-assessments. Accordingly, the district administered 140,711 individual assessments. In the 2014-2015 school year, the district continued to use locally created post-assessments as part of the APPR process but only scheduled students in courses that were part of a teacher's SLOs. Accordingly, the district scheduled 80,770 individual assessments – a reduction of over 40 percent in 2014-15 (59,941 assessments). At the K-2 level, the district employs performance-based assessments in Math and English Language Arts to satisfy NYS APPR regulations and to gauge student progress. In the 2013-14 school year, these performance-based assessments took up a significant amount of instructional time. In the 2014-15 school year, teacher teams streamlined the assessments, resulting in a 20 percent reduction of time needed to administer.
- *Sacramento*--In 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the district suspended administration of benchmark assessments to focus on building teacher and leadership capacity around the implementation of the common core math and ELA. In 2014-2015, the district's professional learning focused on using high-quality tasks and formative-assessment practices. The district also engaged in a yearlong process to identify a vendor for a new CCSS-aligned assessment system and is in the process of constructing interim assessments that align to the content under study.

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- *San Diego*—In the new school year, 2015-2016, the district plans to eliminate its science benchmarks because they are aligned to the old standards. As the district implements the Next Generation Science Standards, the district will consider new assessments. The district kept its interim CCSS assessments but began administering them online with Illuminate. The district will also use the Developmental Reading Assessment, second edition (DRA 2) to assess students' growth in grades TK-3.
- *Seattle*—In 2014-15, the district reduced its MAP testing requirement in grades K-8 of two times a year to once a year in K-2. In 2015-16, the district will begin offering schools a briefer version of MAP. The district also eliminated the requirement for fifth graders to take MAP for math placement; it will use SBAC results instead. The district also reduced its Amplify interim testing (using their Beacon platform) from three times a year in grades three through nine to two times a year, with the third assessment being optional.

V. The Costs of Testing in a Sample District

The following describes the costs to administer the myriad assessments in Council districts. For the purpose of consistency, we profiled the same district that represented the norm in terms of the amount of mandated testing time—Hillsborough County. The district has an enrollment of approximately 200,000 students and a testing budget of about \$2.2 million per year. Table 10 details assessment costs at the district level. This amount constitutes only a small portion of the district's overall annual \$1.8 billion budget—about one-tenth of one percent. The reader should note that a substantial part of the district's assessment budget represents fixed costs. In other words, most large urban districts need resources to comply with various testing requirements and meet assessment needs regardless of the number of tests it administers. For example, most districts will need an assessment manager or director and three to five assessment coordinators, along with one or two warehouse technicians to handle the basics of the testing administration process.

Table 10 shows the testing budget for the Hillsborough County school district. It includes several coordinators for the district's formative testing activities, which are coordinated with English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and other curriculum department leaders. This division of labor in the assessment department is important because it ensures that locally developed assessments are valid and reliable and are able produce the information needed to inform the instructional process and teacher and leader evaluations.

It should be noted that the personnel costs presented in the table do not include the costs of personnel at the school level to administer the assessments. These costs are generally absorbed into individual school budgets and are not part of the overall district budget. These school-level costs will include the percentage of time an assistant principal or principal devotes to managing and securing tests at the school, the cost of hiring substitute teachers or temporary employees to assist test administration, and the time teachers contribute to assessment implementation. In addition, the data do not include costs associated with administering assessments that principals and teachers administer on their own at the building level.

Finally, the cost of the assessments themselves is about the only variable cost for the assessment division. This cost will depend on the number of students in the district who will be taking the various tests, the number of purchased assessments the district chooses to administer, the number of times a year the test is given, and the portion of the testing costs that is covered by the state. Hillsborough County purchases two nationally normed assessments and uses a number of state-mandated assessments that the state itself pays for. In general, the more tests that an individual district adds to what the federal government and the states require, the more expensive it will be for the district itself.

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A recent report by the Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings estimated that the annual expenditure on assessments across the country is about \$1.7 billion annually.³⁷ Although the number appears high, the report suggests that if these dollars were reinvested in classrooms or teacher raises, the student-teacher ratio would fall by only 0.1 student, and teacher salaries would increase by only \$550 per teacher annually.

Table 10. Sample District Assessment Budget

Personnel	Average Hourly	Average Daily	Average Yearly	Total Fringe	Total Expenses
Assessment Personnel	\$28.67	\$229.39	\$58,035.42	\$137,056.43	\$601,339.77
Test Development Center Staff (EET)	\$32.92	\$262.88	\$66,509.88	\$176,703.45	\$775,292.34
Temporary workers					\$60,274.72
ISAs (contracted teachers/item writers)					\$104,022.07
Assessment Expenses					
Stanford Achievement Test Grade 1 & 2					\$300,000.00
Formative Semester/End-of-Course Exams					\$368,000.00
Total Cost for District Assessment					\$2,208,929
Total District Budget					\$1,810,206,587
Percent of District Budget					0.122%

*EET - Empowering Effective Teachers - Test Development Center staff

³⁷ Chingos, M. (November 2012). Strength in Numbers: State Spending on K-12 Assessment Systems. Washington, D.C.: Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings.

VI. Parents

According to a poll of urban school parents administered by the Council of the Great City Schools in the fall of 2014, there are mixed feeling about the nature of testing. Sometimes, the vocabulary one uses in asking about testing changes the responses one gets—and whether the assessments are received favorably or not.³⁸

For instance, the sentence, “It is important to have an accurate measure of what my child knows.” is supported or strongly supported by 83 percent of Great City School parents in our polling. (See Figure 27.) In addition, a majority (75 percent) of parents of students attending one of the Great City Schools who earned less than \$25,000 per year agreed or strongly agreed that “accountability for how well my child is educated is important, and it begins with accurate measurement of what he/she is learning in school.” Support jumps to 81 percent among Great City School parents with annual incomes above \$25,000. (Overall, 78 percent agreed with the statement.) Yet this support drops significantly when the word “test” appears, particularly if accountability is defined as assessment results being used for teacher evaluation. This finding was also evident in a recent Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll.³⁹ In general, references to “testing” raise concerns about future success since “every child is unique.”

Likewise parents respond more favorably to the need for improving tests over references to more rigorous or harder tests. Wording about “harder” tests or “more rigorous” tests simply do not resonate well with parents. Parents did agree that today’s testing does not work as well as it should in measuring student learning. About 70 percent of parents whose children attend one of the Great City Schools support replacing current tests with “better” tests that “measure what students know.” And some 63 percent of Great City School parents indicated that they believed that testing based on the common core standards should help replace drilling and test prep with “meaningful measurements of what my child knows or needs to know.”

In sum, parents want to know how their own child is doing in school and how testing will help ensure equal access to a high quality education. But the language used in informing and engaging parents around this issue is critical.

These results are consistent with a recent poll by EducationPost that found that a plurality of parents thought that standardized tests are fair and have a positive impact, but also thought that tests are overused and are not necessarily helping their children improve.⁴⁰

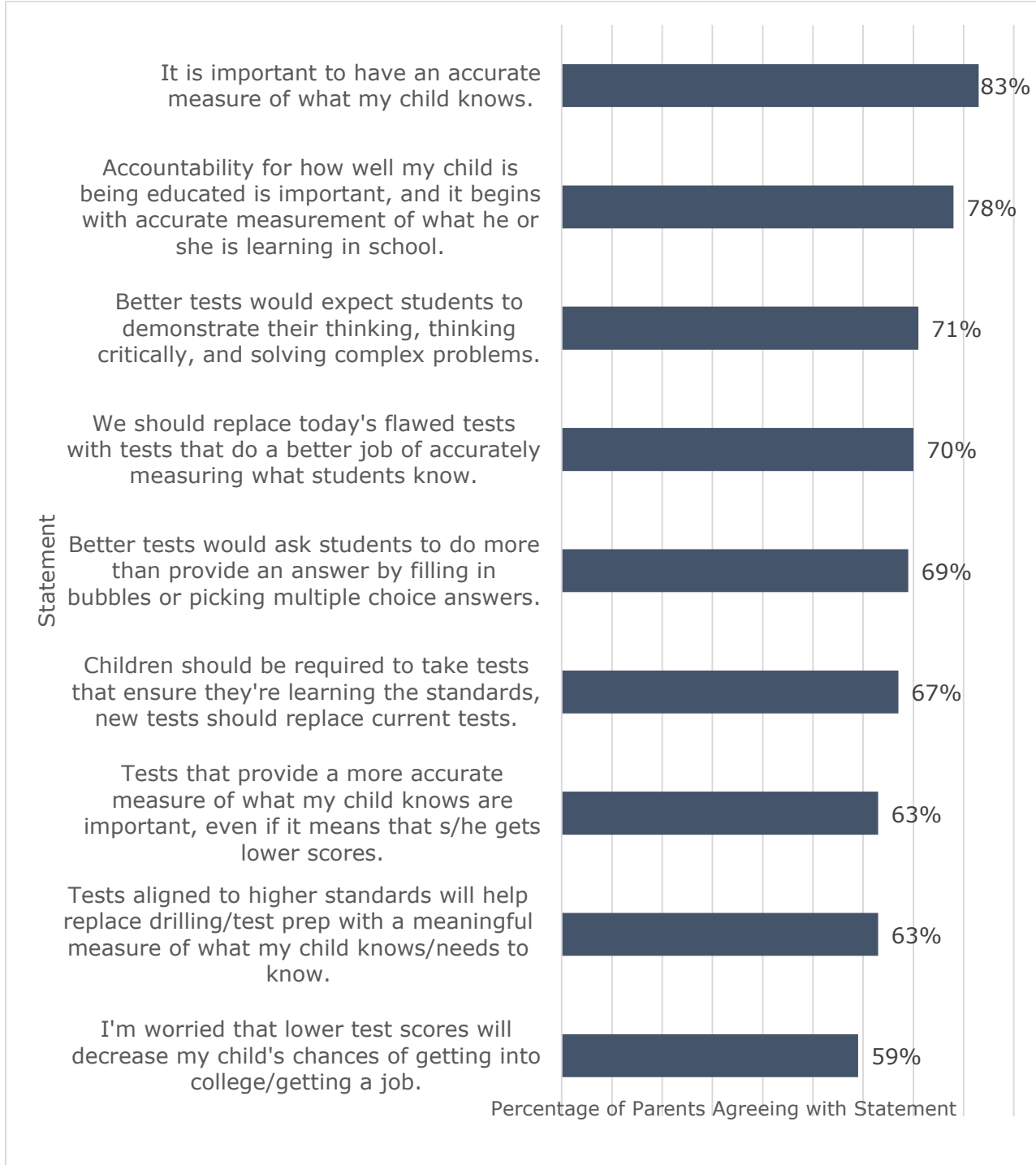
³⁸ Edge Research. *The online survey was conducted by Edge Research and was fielded from August 1 – 8, 2014. The sample included parents whose children attend K-12 schools in Great City districts implementing the Common Core. The final sample included 660 respondents (200 of whom had household incomes of less than \$25,000/year).*

³⁹ Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, 2015.

⁴⁰ Data Mine: Numbers You Can Use (2015). “Parents Support Testing, but Think There’s Too Much”. *U.S. News & World Report*. October 14, 2015

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Figure 27. Great City School Parent Perceptions about Testing



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Discussion and Preliminary Recommendations

A. Discussion

In this report, the Council has inventoried the assessments that the nation's major city school systems administer. We described the different kinds of tests, whom they were given to, and what they were used for. We worked to determine the origins of those tests, i.e., who actually required them. We determined how much time they took and estimated what they cost. We correlated testing time with reading and math scores. And we presented data on what parents thought of testing.

We can draw a number of broad conclusions from the data we collected and the analysis we conducted.

First, the nation's urban public schools administer a lot of tests. The average student takes roughly 112 tests between pre-K and grade 12. At this point, there is a test for almost everything. For instance, districts have multiple tests for predictions, promotions, diagnostics, accountability, course grades, and the like. The benefit of this is that assessments provide the nation's schools with the tools by which to gather objective data, determine whether they are making progress, and diagnose student needs. Moreover, standardized testing has allowed the nation to shine a light on major inequities under which students of differing racial, language, and income groups struggle. The flip side of this coin is that tests are not always very good at doing what we need them to do, they don't tell us everything that is important about a child, and they don't tell us what to do when results are low. This occurs for a variety of reasons: Data come too late to inform immediate instructional needs; teachers aren't provided the professional development they need on how to read, interpret, and make use of the results in their classrooms; teachers and administrators don't trust the results, believe the tests are of low quality, or think the results are misaligned with the standards they are trying to teach; or the multiple tests provide results that are contradictory or yield too much data to make sense of. The result is that the data from all this testing aren't always used to inform classroom practice. In addition, some students fail to see the multitude of tests as important or relevant, and they do not always put forward their best efforts to do well on them.

Second, students spend a fair amount of time taking tests, but the extent of it really depends on the state, the district, the student's grade level, and their learning needs and aspirations. It was clear from our research that the time needed—on average—to take mandatory tests amounts to about 25 hours or so or between four and five days per school year—about 2.34 percent of a typical 180 day school year. This is not a large portion of a school system's total instructional time. However, in practice, testing time can be divided over more than four or five days, and additional instructional time may be lost in downtime (e.g., state NCLB exams may be given in sections with one subject taking multiple half-days). The total can eat into teachers' and

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students' time, particularly if one also takes into account the time necessary to administer the tests and prepare for them. Moreover, much of this testing stacks up in the second half of the school year in a way that makes the second semester seem like one long test.

Third, there is considerable redundancy in the tests that some school systems administer and that some states require. For instance, it was not unusual for school systems to administer multiple summative exams towards the end of the school year that assess student attainment in the same subject. We found this circumstance in districts that gave multiple formative exams to the same students in the same subjects over the course of the year. And we found districts that were giving both summative exams and EOC tests in the same subjects. There is little justification for this practice; it is a waste of time, money, and good will.

Fourth, the vast majority of tests are aligned neither with new college- and career-ready standards nor with each other. We have seen numerous examples where districts gave lots of tests, yielding lots of numbers, but found that they were not anchored to any clear understanding of what the nation, states, or school districts wanted students to know or be able to do in order to be "college- and career-ready." The result is a national educational assessment system that is incoherent and lacks any overarching strategy. Moreover, we think it is worth noting that most tests that schools administer don't actually assess students on any particular content knowledge.

Fifth, the technical quality of the student learning objectives (SLOs) is suspect. It was not within the scope of this study to review the technical quality of all tests that our school systems give, but it was clear to the study team that the SLOs often lacked the comparability, grade-to-grade articulation, and validity that one would want in these instruments. It was also clear that some districts like these assessments because they help build ownership among teachers in the testing process, but one should be clear that the quality of these tools is uneven at best.

Sixth, it is not clear that some of the tests that school districts administer were designed for the purposes for which they are used. The most controversial example is the use of state summative exams to evaluate school district staff when most of these tests were designed to track district and school progress, not individual staff-member proficiency. The Council would argue that test results should play a role in the evaluation of teachers and staff, but gains or losses on these instruments alone cannot be attributed solely to individual teachers or staff members. Still, the failure of these instruments to perform this evaluative role should not be reason not to hold people responsible for student outcomes.

Seventh, the fact that there is no correlation between testing time and student fourth and eighth grade results in reading and math on NAEP does not mean that testing is irrelevant, but it does throw into question the assumption that putting more tests into place will help boost overall student outcomes. In fact, there were notable examples where districts with relatively large amounts of testing time had very weak or stagnant student performance. To be sure, student

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scores on a high-level test like NAEP are affected by many more factors than the amount of time students devote to test taking. But the lack of any meaningful correlation should give administrators pause.

Eighth, the amount of money that school districts spend on testing is considerable in absolute dollar terms, but—like the amount of testing time—it constitutes a small portion of a school district's overall budget. The districts on which we have data will typically spend only a small percentage of their district budget on testing, not counting staff time to administer, score, analyze, and report test results. But the more tests local school systems add to what the federal and state governments require, the more expensive it will be for the district.

Finally, parents clearly want to know how their children are progressing academically. They want to know how they compare with other children, and they want accurate measures of whether their children are on track to be successful in college or careers. Most parents probably have little sense of what the metrics of test results are or how to read them, but they do want to know how their children are doing. Our data indicate that parents believe strongly in the notions of accountability for results and equal access to high quality instruction and educational opportunities, but do not necessarily react positively to the language used to describe testing or changes in testing.

B. Preliminary Recommendations and Conclusion

One of the other things that was clear from the analysis conducted by the Council of the Great City Schools is that many urban school systems have begun to rethink their assessment systems to make them more logical and coherent. They have also begun to curtail testing where it is not necessary or useful.

The Council is committed to two things: (1) It will continue to track what our member urban school systems are doing to improve and limit student testing, and (2) the organization is determined to articulate a more thoughtful approach to building assessment systems. Urban school districts generally believe that annual testing of students is a good idea, particularly in a setting where we are working hard to improve student achievement, but the current assessment regime needs to be revised.

The Council recommends the following preliminary steps—

For federal and state policymakers—

- 1) Retain Congressional requirements for states to test all students in reading and math annually on the same tests statewide in grades three through eight and once in high school. These annual tests provide a critical tool for gauging student achievement on a regular basis. But charge states with lowering the amount of time it takes to return assessment results to districts and schools.

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- 2) Revisit or clarify the U.S. Department of Education's policy on having student test scores for every teacher's evaluation and the requirement for Student Learning Objectives in untested grades and subjects.
- 3) Expand the U.S. Department of Education's regulations to include a one-year exemption for testing recently arrived English learners with beginning levels of English proficiency.
- 4) Charge the U.S. Department of Education and states with providing and more broadly circulating guidelines on accommodations for students with disabilities who are taking ELP assessments.
- 5) Establish consistency from year to year in the assessments that states develop and require, particularly those tests used for accountability purposes.
- 6) Refrain from applying caps on testing time without also considering issues of quality, redundancy, and testing purposes.

For district leaders--

- 7) Review the entire portfolio of tests that the district gives in order to identify areas where there are redundant assessments. Begin curtailing tests that yield similar results but require additional time.
- 8) Ascertain the technical quality and usage of the tests the district is administering. Begin scaling back on assessments that do not meet professional standards and are not being used for the purposes for which they were designed.
- 9) Review all tests to gauge whether they are aligned to state and district standards—and to each other. If they are not aligned to a standard or benchmark your district has embraced, make sure you understand what the tests are anchored to and what they are actually measuring.
- 10) Revisit assessments, including assessments used for the identification of students for gifted and talented programming to ensure that they are not linguistically, culturally, or racially biased.
- 11) Determine whether or not your portfolio of district assessments is presenting leaders, staff, and teachers with a clear and coherent picture about how students in the district, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and ELLs with disabilities, are doing. Assessments that do not add sufficient detail to that picture might be phased out.
- 12) Pursue assessments strategically that can serve multiple purposes and could replace multiple tests that are currently being given.

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In conclusion, assessing the academic performance of students is a critical part of improving our schools and holding leaders and educators accountable for meeting the needs of *all* students. Assessment is also an incredibly complex and, increasingly, controversial undertaking. The results of this study indicate that large city schools—and probably most other kinds of schools—give a variety of tests for a variety of reasons. While it is difficult to know exactly how much testing is too much, we can make some judgments about the amount of testing we found, its redundancies, use, appropriateness, and productivity.

While this report identifies several steps that school districts, in particular, should take to address problems in the current system of assessment, it is clear that the testing requirements faced by America's public schools come from a multitude of sources. In a sense, everyone is culpable to some degree—everyone's "hands are dirty." Whether they know it or not, Congress—not just the Department of Education, the states, or local school systems—has played a large role in increasing testing over the past few decades, adding language to ESEA, IDEA, the Perkins Act, and other legislation that directly contributed to the nature and amount of testing that the nation is now debating. Many of these Congressional requirements were well-intended attempts to hold schools accountable to students, families, and taxpayers for improved results and to determine what works. At the same time, recent attempts to limit testing in the House and Senate versions of the ESEA appear to overlook or forget Congress' role in initiating this assessment-based accountability system in the first place.

For its part, the U.S. Department of Education has also contributed to the situation, particularly over the last several years. Education Department officials readily cite state and local decision making, without much acknowledgement that the administrative policies governing federal initiatives such as Race-to-the-Top and ESEA waivers have also added to the testing burden and the pushback over how testing is used.

The states have also played a role. For the most part, states create, select, or adopt tests after Congress or the U.S. Department of Education mandates that they do so. But states are often too *quick* to change tests or the forms of tests from one year to the next and too *slow* to return the results to schools and school districts. The first problem makes it difficult for policy makers at any level to get comparable data over more than a handful of years to determine whether particular reforms actually worked (e.g., school improvement grants). The second problem mutes the utility of the tests in informing classroom practice and improving student outcomes. At the same time, states often bounce from one testing mandate to another involving end-of-course, formative, and other summative exams without much thought to their redundancy, and they will sometimes require tests that are inappropriate and/or redundant.

To be sure, local school systems, including city school systems on which this study is based, share responsibility for what today's testing portfolio looks like. Too often, the testing regimes they put into place are incoherent, misaligned, redundant, and/or inappropriate. Some of this is the result of others mandating the tests that local school systems should be administering,

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but some is the result of district departments that don't share data or wanted their own results. Some of the problem is also due to test publishers and vendors who sold local officials on the shiniest new test because the old one did not provide some level of desired granularity.

We would be remiss if we did not add a word about testing at the school and classroom levels. It was impossible in this initial study to quantify the amount, nature, and quality of testing initiated at the building level, but we are in and out of schools enough to know that principals and teachers often add their own testing and/or substitute testing they prefer for what the state and district require. The practice adds to the incoherence of our system of assessments.

Furthermore, the rise of testing has been fueled by the business community's desire to infuse data into the educational system, the media's distrust of public education's evidence-free assertions that things were improving, and calls by policymakers and civil rights advocates for greater accountability and educational equity. And finally, the paradigm shift from focusing on educational inputs to focusing on outcomes has accelerated the need for measures of those outcomes.

So it is not hard to understand how these testing systems evolved to look like they do today. If there is incoherence, it is because many different actors have added tests for a variety of disconnected reasons. In addition, until the last few years, there have also been no academic standards against which states and school systems could benchmark their assessment practices—or their instruction. Consequently, the various tests that states and school systems used did not need to be aligned or consistent, or to work together in any strategic way. In short, there are many reasons educators have found themselves saddled with the unwieldy, at times illogical, testing system that we have today. And it will take considerable effort to recreate something more intelligent.

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Appendix A. The Federal Role in Assessment Policy

Congress and the U. S. Department of Education

Congress

ESEA

The U.S. Congress has been a participant in determining how much testing occurs in the nation's schools to a greater extent than many realize. At least as far back as the ESEA reauthorization of 1977-78, Congress had a hand in requiring that schools conduct standardized testing for one purpose or another. Typically, Congress does not mandate the use of a particular test, except in the case of NAEP, but it does frequently require that an objective measure of some sort be put into place.

ESEA Reauthorization 1977-78. The 1977-78 reauthorization of ESEA laid the ground work for what eventually would be more extensive Congressional action on testing. This renewal of the main federal elementary and secondary education law specified that "A local educational agency may receive funds under this title (i.e., Title I) only if (1) effective procedures are adopted for evaluating, in accordance the evaluation schedule promulgated by the Commissioner under section 183 (g), the effectiveness of the programs assisted under this title in meeting the special educational needs of educationally deprived children; (2) such evaluations will include, during each three-year period, the collection and analysis of data relating to the degree to which programs assisted under this title have achieved their goals, including the requirements of section 130, and will also include objective measurements of educational achievement in basic skills over at least a twelve-month period in order to determine whether regular school year programs have sustained effects over the summer; and (3) the evaluation will address the purposes of the program, including the requirements of section 130, and the results of the evaluations will be utilized in planning and improving projects and activities carried out under this title in subsequent years."

This language from the 1977-78 reauthorization, which was passed before the establishment of the U.S. Department of Education, pales in comparison to what would come in subsequent renewals of the act, but it did lay out the initial requirements that programs funded under the law would be evaluated every three years using "objective measures of educational attainment in basic skills".

ESEA Reauthorization 1987-88. It was not until the ESEA reauthorization of 1988 that Congress began to wade into issues of educational accountability that were tied to standardized testing. In this case, accountability was tied to the continuation of schoolwide projects that were first authorized by the 1977-78 statute. Under the accountability paragraph of section 1115, the statute states, "If a school meets the accountability requirements in paragraphs (2) and (3) at the end of such (three-year) period, as determined by the State educational agency, that school will be allowed to continue the schoolwide project for an additional 3-year period."

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The evaluations section of the law (sec. 1019) would state, “Each local educational agency shall— (1) evaluate the effectiveness of programs assisted under this part, in accordance with national standards developed according to section 1435, at least once every three years (using objective measurement of individual student achievement in basic skills and more advanced skills, aggregated for the local educational agency as a whole) as an indicator of the impact of the program.”

Other sections of the act that year specify that local school systems should “collect data on the race, age, gender, and number of children with handicapping conditions” along with information on student grade-level—although the statute was clear to exempt students who were in preschool, kindergarten, or first grade. The reauthorizations of ESEA over this period demonstrated a clear desire on the part of Congress not only to collect achievement data to evaluate program performance but also to assess student performance. It is impossible to quantify the effects of these requirements on student testing at the state and local levels, but the legislation ran parallel with the increasing use of norm-referenced exams in local school systems.

ESEA Reauthorization 1993-94. The ESEA reauthorization in 1994 saw Congress take the next steps in requiring assessments. Under Title I, Subpart 1—Basic Program requirements, Section 1111, State Plans (b)(3) Assessments, the law stated, “Each State plan shall demonstrate that the State has developed or adopted a set of high-quality, yearly student assessments, including assessments in at least mathematics and reading or language arts, that will be used as the primary means of determining the yearly performance of each local educational agency and school served under this part in enabling all children served under this part to meet the State’s student performance standards. Such assessments shall—(A) be the same assessments used to measure the performance of all children, if the State measures the performance of all children; (B) be aligned with the State’s challenging content and student performance standards and provide coherent information about student attainment of such standards; (C) be used for purposes for which such assessments are valid and reliable, and be consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards for such standards; (D) measure the proficiency of students in the academic subjects in which a State has adopted challenging content and student performance standards and be administered at some time during—(i) grades 3 through 5; (ii) grades 6 through 9; and (iii) grades 10 through 12; (E) involve multiple up-to-date measures of student performance, including measures that assess higher order thinking skills and understanding; (F) provide for— (i) the participation in such assessments of all students; (ii) the reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with diverse learning needs, necessary to measure the achievement of such students relative to State content standards; and (iii) the inclusion of limited English proficient students who shall be assessed, to the extent practicable in the language and form most likely to yield accurate and reliable information on what such students know and can do, to determine such student’s mastery of skills, in subjects other than English; (G) include students who have attended schools in a local educational agency for a full academic year, however the performance of students who have attended more than one school in the local educational agency

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in any academic year shall be used only in determining the progress of the local educational agency; (H) provide individual student interpretive and descriptive reports, which shall include scores, or other information on the attainment of student performance standards; and (I) enable results to be disaggregated within each State, local educational agency, and school by gender, by each major racial and ethnic group, by English proficiency status, by migrant status, by students with disabilities as compared with to nondisabled students, and by economically disadvantaged students as compared to students who are not economically disadvantaged.”

ESEA Reauthorization (NCLB) 2001-02. Not until 2002, however, when No Child Left Behind was signed into law, was Congress so explicit with its testing requirements and how they would be used for accountability purposes. First, the law stipulated that at least 95 percent of students participate annually in state assessments in reading/English language arts and mathematics in grades three through eight and once in high school. States were also mandated to administer three science assessments: once in grades 3-5, once in grades 6-8, and once in high school. Results were to be disaggregated by race, income level, and language status. Explicit targets were formulated, and sanctions were articulated for not meeting prescribed benchmarks.

The law stated, “Academic Assessments—(A) In general.—Each state plan shall demonstrate that the State, in conjunction with local educational agencies, has implemented a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments that include, at a minimum, academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science that will be used as the primary means of determining the yearly performance of the State and of each local educational agency and school in the State in enabling all children to meet the State’s challenging student academic standards, except that no state shall be required to meet the requirements of this part relating to science assessments until the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year. (B) Use of Assessments.—Each State may incorporate the data from the assessments under this paragraph into a State-developed longitudinal data system that links student test scores, length of enrollment, and graduation records over time. (C) Requirements.—Such assessments shall—(i) be the same academic assessments used to measure the achievement of all children; (ii) be aligned with the State’s challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards, and provide coherent information about student attainment of such standards; (iii) be used for purposes for which such assessments are valid and reliable, and be consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards; (iv) be used only if the State provides to the Secretary evidence from the test publisher or other relevant sources that the assessments used are of adequate technical quality for each purpose required under this Act and are consistent with the requirements of this section, and such evidence is made public by the Secretary upon request; (v)(I) except as otherwise provided for grades 3 through 8 under clause vii, measure the proficiency of students in, at a minimum, mathematics and reading or language arts, and be administered not less than once during—(aa) grades 3 through 5; (bb) grades 6 through 9; and (cc) grades 10 through 12; (II) beginning not later than school year 2007-2008, measure the proficiency of all students in science and be administered not less than one time during—(aa) grades 3 through 5; (bb) grades 6 through 9; and (cc) grades

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10-12; (vi) involve multiple up-to-date measures of student academic achievement, including measures that assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding; (vii) beginning not later than school year 2005-2006, measure the achievement of students against the challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards in each of grades 3 through 8 in, at a minimum, mathematics, and reading or language arts, except that the Secretary may provide the State 1 additional year if the State demonstrates that exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or a precipitous and unforeseen decline in financial resources of the State, prevented full implementation of the academic assessments by that deadline and that the State will complete implementation within the additional 1-year period:..."

In addition, Title I Part A of the law stipulated that any state receiving Title I Grant funding must participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP is administered to a random sample of students at various grade levels (mostly grades 4 and 8) to estimate the nation's academic progress.

The 2001-02 reauthorization of ESEA (NCLB) had a significant effect on the overall amount of testing that was required in the nation's schools. It spurred the use of annual state assessments, the disaggregation of student results, and accountability for results.

Concerns about the amount of testing prompted the U.S. Senate, as part of its deliberations over the 2015 reauthorization of ESEA, to add the following language requiring states to set limits on testing. Section 1111(b)(2)(L) (2) "Academic assessments. (L) Limitation on assessment time.-- (i) In general.--As a condition of receiving an allocation under this part for any fiscal year, each State shall--(I) set a limit on the aggregate amount of time devoted to the administration of assessments (including assessments adopted pursuant to this subsection, other assessments required by the State, and assessments required districtwide by the local educational agency) for each grade, expressed as a percentage of annual instructional hours; and (II) ensure that each local educational agency in the State will notify the parents of each student attending any school in the local educational agency, on an annual basis, whenever the limitation described in subclause (I) is exceeded. (ii) Children with disabilities and English learners.--Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to supersede the requirements of Federal law relating to assessments that apply specifically to children with disabilities or English learners."

The pending versions of the ESEA reauthorization approved by the House and Senate, respectively, include language that allows parents to opt their children out of testing required under ESEA for any reason or allows parents to opt-out in accordance with state or local laws.

Finally, Congress required under Title I of ESEA that the English proficiency of English Language Learners (also defined as Limited English Proficiency) be assessed. Section 1111 (b)(7) of NCLB of 2002 states, "Academic Assessments of English Language Proficiency—Each State plan shall demonstrate that local educational agencies in the State will, beginning not later than school year 2002-2003, provide for an annual assessment of English proficiency (measuring students' oral

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language, reading, and writing skills in English) of all students with limited English proficiency in the schools served by the State educational agency, except that the Secretary may provide the State 1 additional year if the State demonstrates that exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or a precipitous and unforeseen decline in the financial resources of the State, prevented full implementation of this paragraph by that deadline and that the State will complete implementation within the additional 1-year period.”

IDEA

The second category of Congressional legislation that significantly affected the use of standardized testing in the nation's schools involved the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).⁴¹ In general, the law addresses standardized testing in three ways. First, the law stipulates that most students identified with a disability should take the same educational assessments that are administered to the general population. Second, the law allows states the option of developing alternate assessments for some students. Finally, the law requires assessments to evaluate and reevaluate students when determining their eligibility for special education services.

The latest revision of IDEA became effective in October 2006. The law, as it relates to the participation of students with disabilities in state assessments or alternate assessments, states--

20 U.S.C. * 1412 State Eligibility. “(16) PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENTS — (A) IN GENERAL—All children with disabilities are included in all general State and districtwide assessment programs, including assessments described under section Reports. 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments where necessary and as indicated in their respective individualized education programs. (B) ACCOMMODATION GUIDELINES —The State (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) has developed guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. (C) ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS — (i) IN GENERAL —The State (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) has developed and implemented guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in regular assessments under subparagraph (A) with accommodations as indicated in their respective individualized education programs. (ii) REQUIREMENTS FOR ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS — The guidelines under clause (i) shall provide for alternate assessments that—(I) are aligned with the State's challenging academic content standards and challenging student academic achievement standards; and (II) if the State has adopted alternate academic achievement standards permitted under the regulations promulgated to carry out section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, measure the achievement of children with disabilities against those standards. (iii) CONDUCT OF ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS —The State conducts the alternate assessments described in this subparagraph. (D) REPORTS —The State educational agency (or, in the case of

⁴¹ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1414 (2004).

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a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) makes available to the public, and reports to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children, the following: (i) The number of children with disabilities participating in regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments. (ii) The number of children with disabilities participating in alternate assessments described in subparagraph C)(ii)(I). (iii) The number of children with disabilities participating in alternate assessments described in subparagraph (C)(ii)(II). (iv) The performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments (if the number of children with disabilities participating in those assessments is sufficient to yield statistically reliable information and reporting that information will not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student), compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. (E) UNIVERSAL DESIGN—The State educational agency (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the local educational agency) shall, to the extent feasible, use universal design principles in developing and administering any assessments under this paragraph.”

In addition, the federal law stipulated that a “local educational agency shall (A) use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information, including information provided by the parent” to help determine a child’s disability.

These assessments and other tools vary significantly, depending on a student’s disability. Among other assessment guidelines, the law states that a reevaluation of a student should “occur (i) not more frequently than once a year... and (ii) at least once every 3 years, unless the parent and local education agency agree otherwise.”

Specifically, concerning evaluations and reevaluations, IDEA states, “Sec. 614 (b) Evaluation Procedures--(2) Conduct of evaluation. -- In conducting the evaluation, the local educational agency shall (A) use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information, including information provided by the parent(3) Additional requirements.--Each local educational agency shall ensure that--(B) the child is assessed in all areas of suspected disability”.

Regarding general and alternate assessments, IDEA states, “Sec. 614 (d) Individualized Education Programs.--Definitions.--In this title: (A) (i) (VI) (A) (bb) if the IEP Team determines that the child shall take an alternate assessment on a particular State or districtwide assessment of student achievement, a statement of why-- (AA) the child cannot participate in the regular assessment; and (BB) the particular alternate assessments selected is appropriate for the child”.

The variety of assessments and other tools outlined in the law depend on a student’s disability. The law defines a disability as a child with (1) mental retardation, (2) hearing impairments (including deafness), (3) speech or language impairments, (4) visual impairments (including

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blindness), (5) emotional disturbance, (6) orthopedic impairments, (7) autism, (8) traumatic brain injury, (9) other health impairments, or (10) specific learning disabilities.

Perkins Act

There are a few accountability requirements for secondary CTE programs under the Perkins Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) that include performance both on the regular state assessment in reading/language arts and mathematics, and on industry-recognized technical assessments in a specific field, if they are “available and appropriate.” These are often third-party assessments, like state and federal licenses and industry certifications.

A state may not have technical skills assessments that are aligned with industry-recognized standards in every CTE program area or subject and for every CTE concentrator. Each state will identify, in Part A, Section VI (Accountability and Evaluation) of its new Perkins IV State plan, the program areas for which the state has technical skills assessments, the estimated percentage of students who will be reported in the state's calculation of CTE concentrators who took assessments, and the state's plan and time frame for increasing the coverage of programs and students reported in this indicator to cover all CTE concentrators and all program areas in the future.

The excerpt from the 2006 Perkins Act outlining the secondary assessment requirements follows. “Section 113(b)(2). Accountability. (b) STATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES. (2) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—(A) CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.— Each eligible agency shall identify in the State plan core indicators of performance for career and technical education students at the secondary level that are valid and reliable, and that include, at a minimum, measures of each of the following: (i) Student attainment of challenging academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, as adopted by a State in accordance with section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and measured by the State determined proficient levels on the academic assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of such Act. (ii) Student attainment of career and technical skill proficiencies, including student achievement on technical assessments that are aligned with industry-recognized standards, if available and appropriate. (iii) Student rates of attainment of each of the following: (I) A secondary school diploma. (II) A General Education Development (GED) credential, or other State-recognized equivalent (including recognized alternate standards for individuals with disabilities). (III) A proficiency credential, certificate, or degree, in conjunction with a secondary school diploma (if such credential, certificate, or degree is offered by the State in conjunction with a secondary school diploma). (iv) Student graduation rates (as described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(vi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965). (v) Student placement in postsecondary education or advanced training, in military service, or in employment. (vi) Student participation in and completion of career and technical education programs that lead to non-traditional fields.”

U.S. Department of Education

The federal government has collected data on the status of American public education as least as far back as 1870. Much of that early data collection involved such basic features of public schooling as elementary and secondary school enrollment, attendance, numbers of teachers and their average salaries, numbers of high school graduates, and school spending. Over the years, the amount of data collected by the federal government on the nation's public education system has grown substantially. At this point, the U.S. Department of Education administers scores of surveys and employs hundreds of people whose jobs involve the collection of educational data.

Nonetheless, until recently, most of the data collected by the U.S. Department of Education have not involved the mandating of testing, the use of testing data, or the collection of test data. There was an interesting early use of performance data by the Department in the early 1980s in its launching of the "Wall Chart,"⁴² but there is no indication that the chart actually spurred or dampened the use of testing at state or local levels. The most recent agency requirement involving testing, however, has involved the Department of Education's implementation of Congress's "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act" (ARRA), passed in February 2009.

The Act included funding for the Race to the Top fund (RTT) designed to spur educational reform as well as provide a spur to the economy. In November 2009, the U. S. Department of Education announced it was inviting states to apply for competitive grants under the RTT. The RTT made \$4.35 billion in competitive grants available to states and encouraged states to implement comprehensive reform in (1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace, (2) recruiting, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, (3) building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices, and (4) turning around the lowest-performing schools. The application deadline for the grants was January 19, 2010.

One of the key requirements of the application process was that there would be "no legal barriers at state level to linking student achievement data to teachers and principals for purposes of evaluation." Another involved the definition in the grant announcement of student achievement. The announcement stated—

"Student achievement means—(a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) A student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. (b) For non-tested grades and subjects: Alternative measures of student learning and performance such as scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student

⁴² The Wall Chart included state-by-state data on ACT scores, SAT scores, graduation rates, average teacher salary, federal funds as a percentage of school revenues, the existence of a state compensatory education program, current expenditures per pupil, expenditures as a percentage of income per capita, per capita income, poverty rates for ages 5-17, percentage of students in poverty, median number of years of education of adults in the state, percentage of students who were minority, and percentage of enrollment that was "handicapped." (January 1984)

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performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. Student growth means the change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two points in time. A state may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms (p.59806).”⁴³

In all, 41 states submitted applications for RTT during the first phase of the grant application process. Only two were funded in Phase 1, but all 41 began to move in the direction of reforming educational policy based on stipulations in the grant application.

The relationship between RTT announcements, state decisions to submit an RTT application, and changes in state legislation were not coincidental. In fact, Table A-1 below documents that a number of states submitted RTT grant applications immediately after or before changing state policies regarding teacher evaluation. For example, Louisiana, after their Phase 1 RTT proposal was not funded, introduced HB1033 on March 19, 2010. The bill was signed into law on May 27, 2010, and the state submitted its Phase 2 RTT application the next day, May 28, 2010. In Maryland, prior to applying for Phase 2 funding, SB 275 and HB 1263 were both signed into law on May 4, 2010 and their phase 2 application was submitted on May 27, 2010.

Moreover, some states that were not successful in winning RTT grants still passed legislation reforming teacher and administrator evaluations. In Connecticut, for example, state reform legislation was signed into law on May 26, 2010—one day before the state's Phase 2 RTT application was submitted—but the state never received an RTT award. Indiana passed legislation related to staff performance evaluations in April 2011. These and other states never received RTT awards; however, in their attempts to receive funds, the application process spurred state legislation that resulted in the implementation of new evaluation systems.

If states did not make changes involving new education reforms—teacher and administrator evaluations and assessments—in their quest for RTT, then many did a year or two later when applying for ESEA flexibility or waivers from NCLB's accountability requirements. The language in the Department of Education's waiver policy⁴⁴ in defining student achievement and student growth was almost identical to the language provided in the RTT guidance. The only difference between the language in RTT and the waiver policy involved acceptable assessments for grades and subjects not required under ESEA. The new language referred to “...pre-tests, end-of-course tests, and objective performance-based assessments, student learning objectives, student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA” (p.7) This language guided state applications for ESEA waivers in the same way that it guided RTT applications. Some

⁴³ Race to the Top Fund, 74 Federal Register. 221 (Wednesday, November 18, 2009)(to be codified at 34 CFR Subtitle B, Chapter II).

⁴⁴ ESEA Flexibility Policy Document (June 7, 2012). Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>.

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43 states and the District of Columbia have received ESEA flexibility waivers, and two more—Iowa and Wyoming—have applied and are under review. In applying for waivers, states often used the same or similar language on issues of teacher and administrator evaluation and assessments as they did in applying for RTT.

This pattern in the use of language in many of the state grant and waiver applications regarding new teacher and principal evaluations was consistent. The Maryland HB 1263 Education Reform Act of 2010 calls for data on student growth to be a significant component of the evaluation. The State Board passed regulations that defined a “significant component” to mean that 50 percent of an evaluation must be based on student growth. Much like the Race to the Top definition of student growth, the statute and regulations defined student growth to mean “student progress assessed by multiple measures and from a clearly articulated baseline to one or more points in time.” The regulations established that all teachers will be evaluated annually and that the rating scale will be, at a minimum, Highly Effective, Effective, or Ineffective.

In North Carolina, prior to its submission of its Phase 1 RTT application, the state board chairman and state school superintendent asserted that, as part of approving their Race to the Top application:

- The North Carolina State Board of Education agrees to commit North Carolina to using student achievement growth data as a significant part of teacher and principal evaluation, after undergoing a process engaging all stakeholders to determine a valid, fair, and reliable way to do so.
- The North Carolina State Board of Education approves of the Regional Leadership Academies for principal certification.
- The North Carolina State Board of Education endorses North Carolina working in collaboration with other states on formative, benchmark, diagnostic, and summative assessments based upon the Common Core standards.

The pattern across all states submitting RTT applications was consistent in implementing the reform models called for in RTT. All of the RTT grant and ESEA flexibility applications contained language that committed the states to developing formative assessments or end-of-course assessments. However, the language required of all applicants, which eventually became the language of state legislation, stipulated that a “significant component” or 50 percent of personnel evaluation must be based on student growth, and it was this language that significantly influenced the amount of testing along with requirements that students should be tested for purposes of teacher evaluation in otherwise non-tested grades and subjects. States implementing Race-to-the-Top, approving legislation to qualify for RTT, or applying for ESEA waivers often required that every teacher and principal be evaluated based on student achievement, so a plethora of student achievement measures needed to be developed for teachers in grade levels and subject areas that had not traditionally been tested.

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The result was the addition across the country of end-of-course exams, formative assessments, student learning objectives, computer adaptive assessments, and the like. Examples included Maryland, Georgia, Hawaii, and New Jersey in adding formative assessments; and Georgia, New Mexico, Nevada, and Missouri in adding end-of-course exams or student learning objectives. The bulk of these assessments have been implemented to satisfy state regulations and laws for teacher and principal evaluation driven by and approved by U.S. Department of Education policies, signaling to all interested states that this language was what the Department was looking for.

Overview of State Legislation and Race to the Top/ESEA Waiver Activity

State	State Legislation	Race to the Top Submission/Approval	ESEA Waiver Submission/Approval
Alabama	State Board of Education passes Educator Effectiveness Resolution establishing student learning results as predominant measure of teacher and principal effectiveness	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 9/6/2012; Approved 6/12/2013
		Phase 2 RTT Fund Application submitted 5/28/2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Alaska	State Board of Education adopts Teacher Evaluation regulations to incorporate student learning data in teacher evaluations; Adopted 12/7/2012		Application submitted 9/6/2012; Approved 5/20/2013
California	SB 19: Introduced 12/01/2008; Passed 10/11/2009. Designed to allow teacher data system and student data system to be used in conjunction to measure teacher effectiveness.	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010.	
		Phase 2 RTT Application submitted 6/1/2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Connecticut	SB 438 Public Act No 10-111 - An Act Concerning Education Reform In Connecticut - introduces teacher and principal evaluation; Introduced 3/10/2010; Signed into law 5/26/ 2010	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/15/ 2010	Application submitted 2/11/2011; Approved 5/28/012

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	State Board of Education adopts guidelines for model teacher and administrator evaluation, which include student achievement results	Phase 2 RTT Application submitted 5/27 2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Colorado	Executive Order Creating Governor's Council for Educator Effectiveness on 1/13/2010	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/13/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
	Senate Bill 10-191; Introduced 4/12/ 2010; Passed in 5/20/2010	Phase 2 RTT Application submitted 5/26/2010	
		Awarded in 12/11/2011 in third round of RTT	
		Submitted 11/28/ 2012; Approved 12/29/2012 (amended)	
District of Columbia	Fall 2008 - DCPS started development of the IMPACT Teacher Evaluation system (district policy)	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 7/19/2012
	10/1/2009- IMPACT Teacher Evaluation system announced (district policy)	Phase 2 RTT application submitted 6/1/ 2010	Amendment submitted 7/11/2012; Approved 2/22/2013
		Awarded 8/24/2010 in second round of RTT	
Florida	SB 736 Student Success Act - Educational Personnel; Introduced 1/31/ 2011; Passed in 3/24/2011	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011 and approved 2/9/2012
		Phase 2 RTT application submitted 5/28/2010	
		Awarded 8/24/2010 in second round of RTT	
Georgia	HB 244 ESEA annual performance evaluations; Introduced 1/31/2011; Passed in 3/24/ 2011	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
		Phase 2 RTT Application submitted 6/1/2010	
		Awarded 8/24/2010 in second round of RTT	
Hawaii	Board Policy 2055 Teacher and Principal Performance Evaluation passes 4/17/2012	Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 9/6/2012; Approved 5/20/2013
		Phase 2 RTT Application submitted	

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		5/27/2010	
		Awarded 8/24/2010 in second round of RTT	
Illinois	SB0315 – amended to update teacher and principal evaluations to include student achievement; Introduced 1/11/2010; Passed 1/15/2010	Phase 1 application submitted 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/23/2012; Approved 4/18/14
		Phase 2 application submitted 6/1/2010	
		Awarded RTT Phase 3 on 12/22/2011	
Indiana	SB 0001 - includes chapter on Staff Performance Evaluations; Introduced 1/20/2011; Signed into law 4/30/2011	Phase I application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Iowa		Phase 1 application initially submitted on 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; request is under review
		Phase 2 RTT Application submitted 5/25/2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Kansas		Phase 1 submission 1/18/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 6/19/2012
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Kentucky	Senate Bill One; Introduced 2/3/2009; Passed in 3/25/2009	Application initially submitted in July 2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
	House Bill 180; Introduced 2/5/2013; Signed 3/21/2013	Awarded in 12/23/2011 in third round of RTT	Amended 9/28/2012 and 8/14/2014
Louisiana	HB 1033; Introduced 3/19/2010; Signed into law 5/27/2010	Phase 1 application submitted 1/18/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012
	HB 974; Introduced 3/2/2012; Signed into law 4/18/2012	Phase 2 application submitted 5/28/2010	
		Awarded RTT Phase 3 on 12/22/2011	
Maryland	SB 275 – Maryland Longitudinal Data System; Introduced 1/22/2010; Signed 5/4/2010	Phase 2 application submitted 5/27/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012
	HB 1263 – Education Reform Act of 2010; Introduced 2/18/2010; Signed 5/4/2010	Awarded RTT Phase 2 on 8/24/2010	

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Massachusetts	Chapter 12 – An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap; Signed 1/19/2010	Phase 1 application submitted 1/18/2010	Application submitted 11/4/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
		Phase 2 application submitted 5/28/2010	
		Awarded RTT Phase 2 on 8/24/2010	
Michigan	SB 0981 – public school academies; schools of excellence as new type of public school academy, certain evaluations of public school employees, certain revisions for existing public school academies, and school administrator certification; Introduced 11/10/2009; Signed 12/31/2009	Phase 1 submission 1/15/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 7/19/2012
	SB1509 - Education; teachers; teacher performance evaluation system; modify implementation requirements; Introduced 9/23/2010; Effective 12/21/2010	Phase 2 submission 5/11/2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Minnesota	Minn Stat § 123B045 – District-Created Site-governed Schools; Signed 9/11/2009	Phase 1 submission 1/18/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
	SF0040 – Alternative teacher preparation program; Introduced 1/13/2010; Signed 3/10/2014		
Mississippi	HB 502 established that 50% of teacher and principal evaluation shall be comprised of student achievement data; Introduced 1/20/2014; Bill died	Phase 2 submission 5/27/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 7/19/2012
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Missouri	State Board of Education approves Missouri's Educator Evaluation System; Signed 6/2012	Phase 1 submission 1/18/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 6/29/2012
		Phase 2 submission 5/25/2010	
Nevada	SB 2 – Nevada introduces bill to eliminate prohibition on the use of certain accountability information concerning pupils	Phase 2 submission 5/28/2010 (proposal included end-of-course exams and teacher	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 8/8/2012

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	for the evaluation of teachers, paraprofessionals and other employees [for RTT eligibility]; Introduced 2/10/2010; Passed 3/10/2010	evaluation based on student performance	
	AB 229 – revises teacher evaluation requiring 50% of performance evaluation based on student achievement; introduces performance pay; Introduced 3/2/2011; Signed 6/15/2011	State never awarded RTT grant	
New Jersey	S1455 – TEACHNJ Act; Introduced 2/6/2012; Signed 8/6/2012	Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
	A4168/S2881 – School Children First Act modified the evaluation of teacher and principals including revising tenure acquisition and eliminating seniority rights; Introduced 6/23/11 and 5/19/11; Bill Died	Phase 3 submission 11/21/2011	
	S3173 – Urban Hope Act; Introduced 12/15/2011; Signed 1/12/2012	Awarded Phase 3 RTT 12/23/2011	
New Mexico	SB 502 - Teacher and Principal Evaluation; Introduced 2/15/2011; Bill did not pass	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/15/2012
	Executive Order 2011-024 issued—created New Mexico Effective Teaching Task Force; Introduced 4/25/2011; Signed 11/10/2011	Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
	HB 249 - Teacher & School Leader Effectiveness Act; Introduced 1/27/2012; Died - last action 2/14/2012, passed House	State never awarded RTT grant	
	Governor directs state department of education to carry out new teacher evaluation system on 4/11/2012		
New York	11171 - Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Educational Partnership Organizations; Included measures of student achievement in evaluation process where applicable;	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012

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	Introduced 5/21/10; Signed 5/28/10		
		Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		Awarded Phase 2	
North Carolina	State Board of Education commits to using student achievement growth data as a significant portion of teacher and principal evaluations The Board also endorsed collaboration with other states on formative, benchmark, diagnostic, and summative assessments based on the common core; Signed 1/6/2010	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012
	SESSION LAW 2011-280 Made funds available to require all 11th grade students to take the ACT Also added a component for LEA to make available Work Keys for students who complete the second level of vocational classes; Passed 6/23/2011	Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		Awarded Phase 2 9/24/2010	
Ohio	House Bill 1 adopted new standards, developed assessments that align with common core; introduced measures to use academic improvement for evaluation; Introduced 2/2009; Signed 12/2009	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012
		Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		Awarded Phase 2 9/24/2010	
Pennsylvania		Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2013; Approved 8/20/2013
		Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		Phase 3 submission 11/7/2011	
		Awarded Phase 3 12/22/2011	

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Rhode Island	RIDE Strategic Plan to create formative assessments, interim assessments, and a district wide evaluation system with SLOs; Introduced 9/2009; Signed 1/7/2010, approved by the Board of Regents	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 5/29/2012
		Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		Awarded Phase 2 9/24/2010	
Tennessee	First to the Top HB 7010 and SB7005 to use student achievement data from only one year to make evaluations, student achievement data to judge teacher prep programs, turn around school achievement district; Introduced 1/12/2010; Signed 1/27/2010	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 11/14/2011; Approved 2/9/2012
		Awarded Phase 1 03/29/2010	
Texas			Application submitted 4/15/2013; Approved 9/30/2013
Virginia	State Board of Education revised the Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers and Principals; Introduced 2010; Approved by the Virginia Board of Education 4/28/2011	Phase 1 submission 1/15/2010	Application submitted 7/19/2012; Approved 7/24/2012
		State never awarded RTT grant	
Washington	ESSB 6696 – Authorized creation of new accountability system and created the Teacher and Principal Evaluation Projects (TPEP); Introduced 2/9/2010; Approved 3/29/2010	Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	Application submitted 2/28/2012; Approved 7/6/2012
	ESSB 5859 – Adds specificity to ESSB 6696 and requires the use of student growth in teacher and principal evaluations; Introduced 2/28/2011; Approved 3/8/2012	State never awarded RTT grant	

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Wisconsin	SB 372 established that teacher evaluations may incorporate results of student examinations; Introduced 10/28/2009; Signed 11/9/2009	Phase 1 submission 1/19/2010	Application submitted 2/12/2012; Approved 6/6/2012
	SB 461 established student performance measures as 50% of teacher and principal evaluation score; Introduced 2/10/2012; Signed 4/2/2012	Phase 2 submission 6/1/2010	
		State never awarded RTT grant	

Appendix B. Mandated Tests by District

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District	State	NCLB State Assessments	End-of-Course Exams	Formative Assessments	Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
Albuquerque Public Schools	NM	√	√	√	
Anchorage School District	AK	√	√		
Atlanta Public Schools	GA	√	√	√	√
Austin Independent School District	TX	√	√		√
Baltimore City Public Schools	MD	√	√		√
Birmingham City Public Schools	AL	√	√	√	
Boston Public Schools	MA	√		√	
Bridgeport Public Schools	CT	√			
Broward County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	
Buffalo Public Schools	NY	√		√	√
Charleston Public Schools	SC	√	√		
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools	NC	√	√	√	
Cincinnati Public Schools	OH	√	√		
Chicago Public Schools	IL	√			√
Clark County School District	NV	√	√		
Cleveland Municipal School District	OH	√	√		√
Columbus City School District	OH	√	√		√
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	√
Dallas Independent School District	TX	√	√		
Nashville-Davidson County Public Schools	TN	√	√		
Dayton City School District	OH	√	√		√
Denver Public Schools	CO	√			√
Des Moines Independent Community School District	IA	√		√	
Detroit City School District	MI	√	√		

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District of Columbia Public Schools	DC	√		√	
Duval County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	√
East Baton Rouge Parish Public Schools	LA	√	√		
El Paso Independent School District	TX	√	√		
Fort Worth Independent School District	TX	√	√		
Fresno Unified School District	CA	√		√	
Guilford County Public Schools	NC	√	√	√	√
Hawaii State Department of Education	HI	√	√		
Hillsborough County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	√
Houston Independent School District	TX	√	√	√	
Indianapolis Public Schools	IN	√	√	√	√
Jackson Public Schools	MS	√	√	√	√
Jefferson County Public Schools	KY	√	√	√	√
Kansas City (MO) Public Schools	MO	√	√	√	
Long Beach Unified School District	CA	√		√	
Los Angeles Unified School District	CA	√		√	
Milwaukee Public Schools	WI	√			√
Minneapolis Public School District	MN	√	√		
New York City Department of Education	NY	√		√	
Newark Public Schools	NJ	√	√		
Norfolk Public Schools	VA	√	√	√	√
Oakland Unified School District	CA	√	√	√	
Oklahoma City Public Schools	OK	√	√	√	
Omaha Public Schools	NE	√			
Orange County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	√
Palm Beach County Public Schools	FL	√	√	√	

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Philadelphia School District	PA	√	√		√
Pittsburgh School District	PA	√	√		√
Portland Public Schools	OR	√			
Providence Public Schools	RI	√			
Richmond City Public Schools	VA	√	√		√
Rochester City School District	NY	√			√
Sacramento City Unified School District	CA	√		√	
San Diego Unified School District	CA	√	√	√	
San Francisco Unified School District	CA	√		√	
Santa Ana Unified School District	CA	√			
Seattle Public Schools	WA	√	√	√	√
Shelby County (Memphis) Public Schools	TN	√	√		
St. Louis City Public Schools	MO	√	√		
St. Paul Public Schools	MN	√	√	√	
Toledo City School District	OH	√	√	√	√
Wichita Public Schools	KS	√	√		
All Districts		100.00%	71.2%	59.1%	37.9%

Appendix C. Georgia CTE Tests



FY2015 Technical Skill Attainment Inventory

Cluster Pathways (2014-Present)

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Agribusiness Systems • Agriculture Energy Systems • Agriculture Leadership in Animal Production • Agriculture Leadership in Aquaculture • Agriculture Leadership in Food Product Processing • Agriculture Leadership in Forestry • Agriculture Leadership in Horticulture • Agriculture Leadership in Plant Science • Agriculture Mechanics and Electrical Systems • Agriculture Mechanics and Metal Fabrication • Agriculture Mechanics Systems • Agriscience Systems • Animal and Horticulture Systems • Animal Mechanical Systems • Animal Production and Processing • Companion Animal Systems • Environmental Agriculture Systems • Equine Science	• Agricultural Communication & Leadership (Precision) • Natural Resource Science II (Precision) • Agricultural Science I (Precision) • Agricultural Science I (Precision) • Agricultural Communication & Leadership (Precision) • Agricultural Science I (Precision) • Agricultural Science I Precision) • Agricultural Science I (Precision) • Agricultural Systems Technology II (Precision) • Agricultural Systems Technology I (Precision) • Agricultural Systems Technology II (Precision) • Agricultural Mechanics (NOCTI) • Agricultural Science II (Precision) • Agricultural Science II (Precision) • Agriculture Science I (Precision) • Animal Science I (Precision) • Animal Science II (Precision) • Natural Resource Science II (Precision) • Animal Science II (Precision)
• Food Animal Systems • Food Products and Processing Systems	• Animal Science II (Precision) • Agricultural Science I (Precision)

• Forest Mechanical Systems	• Agricultural Science I (Precision)
• Forest/Renewable Energy	• Natural Resources Science II (Precision)
• Forestry and Animal Science Systems	• Agricultural Science I (Precision)
• Forestry Management Systems	• Natural Resource Science II (Precision)
• Forestry/Natural Resources Management	• Natural Resource Science I (Precision)
	• Forest Products and Processing (NOCTI)
• Forestry/Wildlife Systems	• Natural Resource Science II (Precision)
	• Forest Products and Processing (NOCTI)
• Horticulture and Forest Science	• Agricultural Science I (Precision)
• Horticulture Mechanical Systems	• Agricultural Science I (Precision)
• Landscape Management Systems	• Landscape Management (Precision)
• Plant and Floral Design Systems	• Floriculture and Greenhouse Management (Precision)
• Plant and Floriculture Systems	• Floriculture and Greenhouse Management A (Precision)
	• Plant Science/Horticulture Assessment-State Developed (dispensed by NOCTI)
• Plant and Landscape Systems	• Landscape Management (Precision)
	• Plant Science/Horticulture Assessment-State Developed (dispensed by NOCTI)
• Plant and Mechanical Systems	• Agricultural Science I (Precision)
• Veterinary Science	• Veterinary Assistant (Precision)

Architecture and Construction

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Architectural Drawing and Design	• Certified Apprentice Drafter – Architectural (ADDA)
	• Autodesk Revit Architecture Certified User Exam
	• Architectural Drafting (NOCTI)
	• Architectural Drafting (Skill Connect)
• Carpentry	• Carpentry (Skill Connect)
	• Carpentry Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Electrical	• Electrical Construction Wiring (Skill Connect)
	• Electrical Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Fine Furniture/Cabinetmaking	• Cabinetmaking (Skill Connect)
• Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR)	• Heating, Electrical, Air Conditioning Technology (H.E.A.T.) (HVAC Excellence)
	• HVACR Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
	• Section 608 Certification (EPA)

• Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) - Electrical	• Heating, Electrical, Air Conditioning Technology (H.E.A.T.) (HVAC Excellence) • HVACR Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Machining Operations	• CNC Milling & Turning (Skill Connect) • Machining Skills Certification Level 1 (NIMS)
• Masonry	• Masonry (Skills Connect) • Masonry Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Plumbing	• Plumbing (Skill Connect) • Plumbing Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Sheet Metal	• Sheet Metal Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Welding	• Welding (Skills Connect) • Welding Level 1 Certification (NCCER)

Arts, A/V Technology and Communications

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Audio Video Technology and Film	• Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Premiere Pro • Television Production (NOCTI) • Television Video Production (Skill Connect)
• Graphic Communications	• Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe InDesign • Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Illustrator • Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Photoshop • Digital File Preparation (PrintED/Skill Connect) • Graphic Communications (Skill Connect) • Graphic Production Technology (NOCTI) • Offset Press Operations (PrintED/Skill Connect)
• Graphic Design	• Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe InDesign • Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Illustrator • Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Photoshop • Advertising Design (Skill Connect)

Business Management and Administration

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
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• Business and Technology	• Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2010 • Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2013 • Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2007
• Entrepreneurship	• Entrepreneur (OK CareerTech Testing) • General Management (NOCTI)
• Human Resources Management	• Human Resources Management (NOCTI)
Education and Training	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Early Childhood Care and Education	• Child Development Associate (CDA) – Preschool (CDA Council) • Early Care & Education: Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) (OK CareerTech Testing) • Early Childhood Education and Care – Basic (NOCTI)
• Early Childhood Care and Education/Practicum	• Child Development Associate (CDA) – Preschool (CDA Council) • Early Care & Education: Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) (OK CareerTech Testing) • Early Childhood Education and Care – Basic (NOCTI)
• Teaching as a Profession	• Teaching as a Profession (NOCTI) State Developed
Energy	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Energy and Power: Generation, Transmission and Distribution	• Energy Industry Fundamentals Certification (CEWD) • Engineering Assessment – State Developed (NOCTI) • Engineering Technology (Skill Connect)
• Energy Systems	• Engineering Assessment – State Developed (NOCTI) • Engineering Technology (Skill Connect)
Finance	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Advanced Accounting	• Accounting-Advanced (NOCTI) • QuickBooks Certification (Certiport)

• Business Accounting	- Accounting-Basic (NOCTI) - Business Financial Management (NOCTI)
• Financial Services	- Financial & Investment Planning (NOCTI) - Wise Financial Literacy Certification
Health Science	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Biotechnology Research and Development	• Biotechnology (Precision)
• Diagnostics/Clinical Lab	- Laboratory Assistant (OK CareerTech Testing) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Diagnostics/Non-Invasive Technology in Healthcare	- EKG Technician Certification (CET) (NHA) - National Certified ECG Technician (NCET) (NCCT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Diagnostics/Phlebotomy	- National Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NCPT) (NCCT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Health Informatics/Health Information Management – Medical Office	- Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) (NHA) - Health Informatics (NOCTI) - Administrative Medical Assistant (formerly Medical Assisting-Administrative) (OK CareerTech Testing) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Health Informatics/Health Information Technology	- Certified Telehealth Coordinator (CTC) (SE Telehealth) - Certified Telemedicine Clinical Presenter (CTCP) (SE Telehealth) - Certified Telehealth Liaison (CTL) (SE Telehealth)
• Support Services	• National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Dental Science	- Dental Assisting (NOCTI) - Dental Assisting (OK CareerTech Testing) - Dental Assisting I (Precision) - Dental Assisting II (Precision) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Emergency Medical Responder	- Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA) - Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) (NREMT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Exercise Physiology	- Exercise Science/Sports Medicine (Precision) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)

• Therapeutic Services/Patient Care	• Certified Nursing Aide (CNA) • Certified Patient Care Technician (CPCT) (NHA) • National Certified Patient Care Technician (NCPCT) (NCCT) • National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Pharmacy	• Pharmacy Technician (OK CareerTech Testing) • National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Public Health	• National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Public Safety Communications	• National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Sports Medicine	• Athletic Training Student Aide (OK CareerTech Testing) • Exercise Science/Sports Medicine (Precision) • National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
• Therapeutic Services/Surgical Technology	• Surgical Technology (OK CareerTech Testing) • Tech in Surgery-Certified (TS-C) (NCCT) • National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Hospitality and Tourism	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:

Culinary Arts	- Basic Culinary Arts (formerly Hospitality: Hot Food Cook) (OK CareerTech Testing) - Certified Junior Culinarian (CJC) (ACF) - Culinary Arts Cook Level 2 (NOCTI) - Secondary Culinary Graduate Certificate (ACF)
Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism	- Hospitality Management & Lodging (NOCTI) - Lodging (NOCTI) - Travel & Tourism (NOCTI)
Sports and Entertainment Marketing	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Human Services	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Food and Nutrition	- Food Science Fundamentals Pre-Professional (AAFCS) - Nutrition, Food, and Wellness Pre-Professional (AAFCS) - ServSafe Food Safety Handler Certification - ServSafe Food Safety Manager Certification
Interior, Fashion and Textiles	- Fashion Strategies (Precision) - Interior Decorating & Design (NOCTI) - Interior Design Fundamentals Pre-Professional (AAFCS)
Personal Care Services – Cosmetology	- Cosmetology (Skill Connect) - Licensed Master Cosmetologist (Georgia State Board of Cosmetology)
Personal Care Services - Nails	Nail Care (Skill Connect)
Information Technology	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Computer Science	Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Software Development Fundamentals

	• Law Enforcement (Precision) • National Law, Public Safety, Security and Corrections Core (LPSSC)
• Fire and Emergency Services/Emergency Medical Responder	• Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA) • Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) (NREMT)
• Fire and Emergency Services/Firefighting	• Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA)
• Fire and Emergency Services/Public Safety Communications	• Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA)
• Law Enforcement Services/Criminal Investigations	• Criminal Justice (NOCTI) • Criminal Justice/CSI (Skills Connect) • Law Enforcement (Precision) • National Law, Public Safety, Security and Corrections Core (LPSSC)
• Law Enforcement Services/Forensic Science	• Criminal Justice (NOCTI) • Criminal Justice/CSI (Skills Connect) • Law Enforcement (Precision) • National Law, Public Safety, Security and Corrections Core (LPSSC)
• Legal Services/Legal Administrative Services	• Legal Office Assistant (OK CareerTech Testing)
• Security and Protective Services	• Criminal Justice (NOCTI) • Criminal Justice/CSI (Skills Connect) • National Law, Public Safety, Security and Corrections Core (LPSSC)
Manufacturing	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Manufacturing	• Automated Manufacturing Technology (AMT) (Skill Connect) • Manufacturing, Introduction (Precision) • Manufacturing Technology (NOCTI) • Robotics and Automation (Skill Connect)
• Mechatronics	• Mechatronics (Skill Connect) • Mechatronics-Level 1 (NOCTI)

Marketing

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Fashion, Merchandising and Retail Management	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK Institute) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Retail Merchandising (NOCTI) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Marketing and Management	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK Institute) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Marketing Communications and Promotions	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK Institute) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Electronics	- Electronics Applications/Electronics Technology (Skill Connect) - Electronics Technology (NOCTI)
Engineering and Technology	- Engineering (State Developed) (NOCTI) - Engineering Technology (Skill Connect)
Engineering Drafting and Design	- Autodesk AutoCAD Certified User Exam - Autodesk Inventor Certified User - Certified Apprentice Drafter – Mechanical (ADDa) - Certified Drafter – Mechanical (ADDa) - Certified SolidWorks Associate (CSWA) - Technical Drafting (Skills Connect)

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
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Automobile Maintenance and Light Repair	- ASE Student Certification Exams: - Suspension and Steering - Brakes - Electrical/Electronic Systems - Engine Performance - Engine Repair - Automatic Transmission/Transaxle - Manual Drive Train and Axles - Heating and Air Conditioning - Maintenance and Light Repair NOTE: A student may take one or all nine of the above exams
Automobile Service Technology	- ASE Student Certification Exams: - Suspension and Steering - Brakes - Electrical/Electronic Systems - Engine Performance - Engine Repair - Automatic Transmission/Transaxle - Manual Drive Train and Axles - Heating and Air Conditioning - Maintenance and Light Repair NOTE: A student may take one or all nine of the above exams
Collision Repair: Non-Structural Analysis and Damage Repair	- ASE Student Certification Exams: - Structural Analysis and Damage Repair - Non-Structural Analysis and Damage Repair - Mechanical and Electrical Components - Painting and Refinishing NOTE: A student may take one or all four of the above exams.
Collision Repair: Painting and Refinishing	- ASE Student Certification Exams: - Structural Analysis and Damage Repair - Non-Structural Analysis and Damage Repair - Mechanical and Electrical Components - Painting and Refinishing NOTE: A student may take one or all four of the above exams.
Distribution & Logistics	- Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) (MSSC) - Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) (MSSC)
Flight Operations	Private Pilot Airplane-Written Exam Only (FAA)
Marine Engine Technology	Marine Service Technology (Skill Connect)

Master Automobile Service Technology	- ASE Student Certification Exams: - Suspension and Steering - Brakes - Electrical/Electronic Systems - Engine Performance - Engine Repair - Automatic Transmission/Transaxle - Manual Drive Train and Axles - Heating and Air Conditioning - Maintenance and Light Repair NOTE: A student may take one or all nine of the above exams
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FY2015 Technical Skill Attainment Inventory

Concentration Pathways (2005-2014)

Agricultural Education

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Agricultural Mechanics	- Agricultural Mechanics (NOCTI) - Agricultural Systems Technology II (Precision)
Forestry/Natural Resources	- Forest Products and Processing (NOCTI) - Natural Resource Science I (Precision)
Plant Science/Horticulture	- Plant Science/Horticulture Assessment-State Developed (dispensed by NOCTI) - Floriculture and Greenhouse Management A (Precision) - Landscape Management (Precision)

Architecture, Construction, Communications & Transportation (ACCT)

Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
- Marine Engine Technology - Metals Technology (Machining Operations)	- Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Photoshop - Advertising Design (Skills Connect) - Marine Service Technology (Skills Connect) - CNC Milling & Turning - Precision Machining (Skills Connect) - Machining Skills Certification Level 1 (NIMS)

• Metals Technology (Welding)	• Welding (Skills Connect) • Welding Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Metals Technology (Sheet Metal)	• Sheet Metal Level 1 Certification (NCCER)
• Transportation Logistical Operations	• ASE Student Certification Exams: ○ Suspension and Steering ○ Brakes ○ Electrical/Electronic Systems ○ Engine Performance ○ Engine Repair ○ Automatic Transmission/Transaxle ○ Manual Drive Train and Axles ○ Heating and Air Conditioning ○ Maintenance and Light Repair NOTE: A student may take one or all nine of the above exams
• Transportation Logistical Support	• ASE Student Certification Exams: ○ Suspension and Steering ○ Brakes ○ Electrical/Electronic Systems ○ Engine Performance ○ Engine Repair ○ Automatic Transmission/Transaxle ○ Manual Drive Train and Axles ○ Heating and Air Conditioning ○ Maintenance and Light Repair NOTE: A student may take one or all nine of the above exams
Business & Computer Science	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Administrative/Information Support	• Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2010 • Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2013
• Business Logistics Management	• Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) 2007 • Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) (MSSC) • Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) (MSSC)
• Computer Networking	• Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) • Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Networking Fundamentals • Network+ Certification (CompTIA)

• Computer Systems & Support	- A+ Certification (CompTIA) - Computer Maintenance Technology (Skills Connect) - Microcomputer Repair Technician (OK CareerTech Testing)
• Computing	- Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Gaming Development Fundamentals - Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Microsoft .NET Fundamentals - Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Software Development Fundamentals - Sun Certified Java Associate (Oracle)
• Financial Management: Accounting	- Business Financial Management (NOCTI) - QuickBooks Certification (Certiport)
• Financial Management: Services	- Financial & Investment Planning (NOCTI) - w!se Financial Literacy Certification
• Interactive Media	- Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Adobe Flash - Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Dreamweaver - Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Photoshop - CIW Site Development Associate - CIW Web Design Specialist - IC3 Internet and Computing Core Certification (Certiport) - Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): HTML5 Application Developer Fundamentals - Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA): Web Development Fundamentals
• Small Business Development	- Entrepreneur (OK CareerTech Testing) - Fundamental Business Concepts (ASK) - General Management (NOCTI)
Culinary Arts	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
• Culinary Arts	- Basic Culinary Arts (formerly Hospitality: Hot Food Cook) (OK CareerTech Testing) - Certified Junior Culinarian (CJC) (ACF) - Culinary Arts Cook Level 2 (NOCTI) • Secondary Culinary Graduate Certificate (ACF)

Education

Career Pathway Name:**End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:**

- Early Childhood Education

- Child Development Associate (CDA) – Preschool (CDA Council)
- Early Care & Education: Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) (OK CareerTech Testing)
- Early Childhood Education and Care – Basic (NOCTI)

- Teaching as a Profession

- Teaching as a Profession (NOCTI) State Developed

Engineering & Technology

Career Pathway Name:**End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:**

- Electronics

- Electronics Applications/Electronics Technology (Skill Connect)
- Electronics Technology (NOCTI)

- Energy Systems

- Engineering (NOCTI) State Developed
- Engineering Technology (Skills Connect)

- Engineering

- Engineering (NOCTI) State Developed
- Engineering Technology (Skills Connect)

- Engineering Graphics & Design

- Autodesk AutoCAD Certified User Exam
- Autodesk Inventor Certified User
- Certified Apprentice Drafter – Mechanical (ADDA)
- Certified Drafter – Mechanical (ADDA)
- Certified SolidWorks Associate (CSWA)
- Technical Drafting (Skills Connect)

- Manufacturing

- Automated Manufacturing Technology (AMT) (Skills Connect)
- Manufacturing, Introduction (Precision)
- Manufacturing Technology (NOCTI)
- Robotics and Automation (Skills Connect)

Family & Consumer Sciences	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Consumer Services	- Financial Literacy (OK CareerTech Testing) - Personal and Family Finance Pre-Professional (AAFCS)
Interior Design	- Interior Decorating & Design (NOCTI) - Interior Design Fundamentals Pre-Professional (AAFCS)
Nutrition & Food Science	- Food Science Fundamentals Pre-Professional (AAFCS) - Nutrition, Food, and Wellness Pre-Professional (AAFCS) - ServSafe Food Safety Handler Certification - ServSafe Food Safety Manager Certification
Government & Public Safety	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Homeland Security & Emergency Services	- Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA) - Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) (NREMT)
Law & Justice	- Criminal Justice/CSI (Skills Connect) - National Law, Public Safety, Security and Corrections Core (LPSSC)
Healthcare Science	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:
Diagnostic Services	Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) (NHA)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

	- National Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NCPT) (NCCT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Health Informatics	- Certified Billing and Coding Specialist (CBCS) (NHA) - Certified Electronic Health Record Specialist (CEHRS) (NHA) - Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) (NHA) - National Certified Insurance and Coding Specialist (NCICS) (NCCT) - National Certified Medical Office Assistant (NCMOA) (NCCT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Personal Care Services: Cosmetology	- Cosmetology (Skills Connect) - Licensed Master Cosmetologist (Georgia State Board of Cosmetology)
Physical Medicine	National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Therapeutic Services: Emergency Services	- Emergency Management Institute "Are You Ready" Certification (FEMA) - Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) (NREMT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Therapeutic Services: Medical Services	- Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) (NHA) - Certified Patient Care Technician (CPCT)/Associate/Nurse Technician (NHA) - EKG Technician Certification (CET) (NHA) - National Certified ECG Technician (NCET) (NCCT) - National Certified Insurance and Coding Specialist (NCICS) (NCCT) - National Certified Medical Office Assistant (NCMOA) (NCCT) - National Certified Patient Care Technician (NCPCT) (NCCT) - National Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NCPT) (NCCT) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Therapeutic Services: Nursing	- Certified Nursing Assistant or (Aide) (CNA) (NACES) - Certified Patient Care Technician (CPCT)/Associate/Nurse Technician (NHA) - National Health Science Assessment (NCHSE)
Marketing, Sales & Services	
Career Pathway Name:	End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA) Exam Title:

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

Fashion Marketing	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Retail Merchandising (NOCTI) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Marketing Communications & Promotion	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Marketing & Management	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Sports & Entertainment Marketing	- Fundamental Marketing Concepts (ASK) - Marketing Education Manager Trainee (OK CareerTech Testing) - Standard Marketing POS/End of Program HS: (3 credits) (MBA Research)
Travel Marketing & Lodging Management	- Hospitality Management & Lodging (NOCTI) - Lodging (NOCTI) - Travel & Tourism (NOCTI)

Appendix D. Assessment Survey

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

Introduction

At the direction of the Council of the Great City Schools' board of directors, the organization is surveying its members on the array of assessments you conduct and how you use the results. The purpose of this survey is to document the assessments your district expects to use across all grades, subjects, and student groups, including summative and formative assessments, in the upcoming 2014-2015 school year.

The survey is divided into two major sections and six overall subsections:

National and State Required Assessments

- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) exams
- End-of-Course (EOC) exams
- Student Learning Objectives (SLO) exams
- State Accountability Summative and Formative exams, and

District Required Assessments

- District-wide general education assessments
- Specialty assessments (English Learners, Gifted, College Entry, etc.).

Please note that you will be asked to respond to the same set of items for each assessment you administer. You will be able to save your progress and return to the survey at your convenience. If you have any questions, please contact Ray Hart (rhart@cgcs.org) or Moses Palacios (mpalacios@cgcs.org). Results from this survey will only be reported in the aggregate and any identifiable information will be kept strictly confidential.

We thank you for your time and energy in completing this survey.

* Please enter your contact information below:

Name

Title

Email Address

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* Please indicate your district

* What is your projected K-12 enrollment for 2014-2015?

* What is your total testing budget for 2014-2015? (i.e., purchases, scoring, administration, etc.)

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School District Assessment Survey
National and State Assessments
This section applies only to federal and state assessments that your district did NOT select or require (e.g., NAEP, state accountability tests, state end-of-course (EOC) exams, state Career and Technical Education (CTE) tests, etc.). Please DO NOT include district-selected national-norm reference assessments (e.g. TerraNova, ITBS, NWEA, etc.)

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School District Assessment Survey

National Assessment of Educational Progress

* What is the total number of students expected to take the National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading and mathematics during the 2014-2015 school year? Approximately:

4th Grade

8th Grade

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School District Assessment Survey

Career Technical Education (CTE) Assessments

* Does your state require CTE assessments?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

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School District Assessment Survey

Career Technical Education Assessments

* How many total CTE tests (i.e., number of student test results received) do you expect to administer as a district during the 2014-2015 school year?

* How many students district wide are enrolled in a CTE concentration?

* Are any of your CTE assessments administered as result of your state Race To The Top grant or NCLB waiver application?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* Will results from your CTE exams factor into state accountability measures under your NCLB waivers (if you have one)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

End-of-Course Assessments

* Does your state or district require End-of-Course assessments?

- ☐ Yes, EOCs are a state requirement
- ☐ Yes, EOCs are a district requirement
- ☐ No

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

End-of-Course Assessments

* What are the grades and subjects in which your end-of-course assessments are administered? (Mark all that apply)

	English	Math	Science	Social Studies
Grade 9	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 10	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 11	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 12	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

* Will results from your EOC exams factor into student end-of-course grades?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Other (please specify)

* What item types will be included in your EOC assessments? (Mark all that apply)

☐ Multiple choice

☐ Short answer

☐ Extended response

☐ Rubric/Essay

☐ Performance task

☐ Don't Know/Not Sure

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* For the typical EOC assessment, what is the allotted time for a general education student to complete each administration of this test per subject?

- ☐ 1-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-60 minutes
- ☐ 61-90 minutes
- ☐ 91-120 minutes
- ☐ 121-150 minutes
- ☐ 151-180 minutes
- ☐ 181 minutes or more

* Are any of your EOC assessments administered as result of your state Race To The Top grant or NCLB waiver application?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

* Will results from your EOC exams factor into state accountability measures under you NCLB waivers (if you have one)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

Student Learning Objective Assessments

* Does your state or district require Student Learning Objective assessments?

☐ Yes, SLOs are a state requirement

☐ Yes, SLOs are a district requirement

☐ No

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

Student Learning Objective Assessments

* What are the grades and subjects in which your student learning objective assessments will be administered? (Mark all that apply)

	English Lang. Arts	Reading	Math	Science	Soc. Studies	Writing	World Lang	Visual/ Performing Arts	Technology	Physical Ed	Other (Specify Below)
Grade PK	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade K	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

* Will results from your SLO assessments factor into student end-of-course grades?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* What item types will be included in your SLO assessments? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Multiple choice
- ☐ Short answer
- ☐ Extended response
- ☐ Rubric/Essay
- ☐ Performance task
- ☐ Don't Know/Not Sure

* For the typical SLO assessment, what is the allotted time for a general education student to complete each administration of this test per subject?

- ☐ 1-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-60 minutes
- ☐ 61-90 minutes
- ☐ 91-120 minutes
- ☐ 121-150 minutes
- ☐ 151-180 minutes
- ☐ 181 minutes or more

* Are any of your SLO assessments administered as result of your state Race To The Top Grant or NCLB waiver application?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

* Will results from your SLO exams factor into state accountability measures under your NCLB waivers (if you have one)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

State Accountability - Summative Assessments

* What college- and-career-ready summative assessment(s) will you be giving in the 2014-2015 school year?
(Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Our 2013-2014 state developed assessment based on previous standards
- ☐ PARCC assessment
- ☐ SBAC assessment
- ☐ A new state developed college- and-career readiness assessment for 2014-2015

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

State Accountability - State-Developed Summative Assessments

Please answer the following items based only on your state-developed summative assessments. Do not consider your PARCC/SBAC assessments when answering these items.

* What are the grades and subjects in which your state-developed (non-PARCC/SBAC) summative assessments will be administered? (Mark all that apply)

	English Language Arts	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies	Writing	Technology	Other (Please Specify Below)
Grade PK	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade K	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* What item types will be included in your state-developed summative assessment(s)? Do not consider your writing assessment in this response. (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Multiple choice
- ☐ Short answer
- ☐ Extended response
- ☐ Rubric/Essay
- ☐ Performance task
- ☐ Don't Know/Not Sure

* For your state-developed summative assessment(s), what is the typical allotted time for a general education student to complete each administration of the test(s) per subject?

- ☐ 1-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-60 minutes
- ☐ 61-90 minutes
- ☐ 91-120 minutes
- ☐ 121-150 minutes
- ☐ 151-180 minutes
- ☐ 181 minutes or more

* How will your state-developed summative assessment(s) be administered? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Non-scantron paper and pencil
- ☐ Scantron
- ☐ Computer based
- ☐ Computer adaptive
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* How long will schools wait before receiving state-developed assessment results?

- ☐ Immediate results
- ☐ 24 hours
- ☐ 1-2 weeks
- ☐ 3-4 weeks
- ☐ 2-4 months
- ☐ 5 months or more
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

State Accountability - Formative Assessments

In this section, please provide information regarding your district's formative assessments. These assessments may either be required by your state or your district. District benchmark assessments may be considered here or in the next section of the survey.

* Will you implement a district wide formative assessment leading up to the end-of-year performance based/summative assessment this upcoming school year?

- ☐ Not Sure/Decision has not been made
- ☐ We will not be administering a formative assessment this year
- ☐ Administering a PARCC/SBAC formative assessment
- ☐ Administering a commercial/purchased formative assessment
- ☐ Administering a district-developed formative assessment

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

State Accountability - Formative Assessments

* Who requires the administration of the formative assessment?

☐ Federal government

☐ State

☐ District

☐ School

☐ Grant

☐ Program

☐ Other (please specify)

* What item types will be included in the formative assessment? (Mark all that apply)

☐ Multiple choice

☐ Short answer

☐ Extended response

☐ Rubric/Essay

☐ Performance task

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* What are the grades and subjects in which your state-developed (non-PARCC/SBAC) formative assessments will be administered? (Mark all that apply)

	English Lang.	Arts	Reading	Math	Science	Soc. Studies	Writing	Other (Please Specify Below)
Grade PK	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade K	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* How will the formative assessment be used in the district? (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Identify students for specialized programs (Students with disabilities, English language learners, Gifted and Talented) | ☐ Inform the selection of professional development |
| ☐ Determine state accountability | ☐ Factor into course grades |
| ☐ Determine district accountability | ☐ Earn Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate credit |
| ☐ Identify low-performing schools | ☐ Measure English language proficiency |
| ☐ Predict student performance (state assessment, college readiness, etc.) | ☐ Inform goals and objectives for school buildings |
| ☐ Identify students' learning needs (Diagnostic) | ☐ Inform goals and objectives for the district |
| ☐ Target student interventions | ☐ Inform international comparisons |
| ☐ Inform classroom instruction | ☐ Inform national comparisons |
| ☐ Satisfy basic skills requirements for a high school diploma | ☐ Inform admissions into magnet/gifted schools |
| ☐ Determine student promotion | ☐ Inform college admissions/placement |
| ☐ Inform teacher evaluation/effectiveness | ☐ Evaluate program effectiveness |
| ☐ Inform principal evaluation/effectiveness | |

* How often will the formative assessment be given during the school year?

- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Twice a year - Fall and Spring
- ☐ Twice a year - Fall and Winter
- ☐ Three times a year
- ☐ Every other year
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* How much time will it take the average general education student to complete each administration of the formative assessment per subject?

- ☐ 1-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-60 minutes
- ☐ 61-90 minutes
- ☐ 91-120 minutes
- ☐ 121-150 minutes
- ☐ 151-180 minutes
- ☐ 181 minutes or more

* How will the formative assessment be administered? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Non-scantron paper and pencil
- ☐ Scantron
- ☐ Computer based
- ☐ Computer adaptive
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* How long will schools wait before receiving assessment results?

- ☐ Immediate results
- ☐ 24 hours
- ☐ 1-2 weeks
- ☐ 3-4 weeks
- ☐ 2-4 months
- ☐ 5 months or more
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

School District Assessment Survey

School District Assessments

Please list additional assessments your district expects to administer to your students or that your district will require during the 2014-2015 school year. Complete these questions for each assessment your district will administer or require this upcoming school year. These assessments should include such tests as TerraNova, ITBS, ACCESS, NWEA, DIBELS, SAT, ACT, AP, etc.

* What is the name of this assessment?

* Who is the publisher of this assessment? (e.g. district, Houghton Mifflin, Scholastic, etc.)

* Who requires the administration of this assessment?

☐ Federal government

☐ State

☐ District

☐ School

☐ Grant

☐ Program

☐ Other (please specify)

* What is the type of assessment? (Mark all that apply)

☐ Summative

☐ Formative

☐ Interim/Benchmark

☐ Diagnostic/Placement

☐ Nationally normed

☐ College entry

☐ Language proficiency

☐ End of course

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* What item types will be included in this assessment? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Multiple choice
- ☐ Short answer
- ☐ Extended response
- ☐ Rubric/Essay
- ☐ Performance task

* What are the grades and subjects in which this assessment will be administered? (Mark all that apply)

	English Lang. Arts	Reading	Math	Science	Soc. Studies	Writing	World Lang	Visual/ Performing Arts	Technology	Physical Ed	Other (Specify Below)
Grade PK	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade K	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grade 12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

* Will the assessment be administered to the entire general education student population at tested grade levels or a sample of student populations at tested grade levels?

- ☐ The total student population at tested grade levels
- ☐ A sample of students at tested grade levels

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* How will this assessment be used in the district? (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Identify students for specialized programs (Students with disabilities, English language learners, Gifted and Talented) | ☐ Inform the selection of professional development |
| ☐ Determine state accountability | ☐ Factor into course grades |
| ☐ Determine district accountability | ☐ Earn Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate credit |
| ☐ Identify low-performing schools | ☐ Measure English language proficiency |
| ☐ Predict student performance (state assessment, college readiness, etc.) | ☐ Inform goals and objectives for school buildings |
| ☐ Identify students' learning needs (Diagnostic) | ☐ Inform goals and objectives for the district |
| ☐ Target student interventions | ☐ Inform international comparisons |
| ☐ Inform classroom instruction | ☐ Inform national comparisons |
| ☐ Satisfy basic skills requirements for a high school diploma | ☐ Inform admissions into magnet/gifted schools |
| ☐ Determine student promotion | ☐ Inform college admissions/placement |
| ☐ Inform teacher evaluation/effectiveness | ☐ Evaluate program effectiveness |
| ☐ Inform principal evaluation/effectiveness | |

* How often will this test be given during the school year?

- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Twice a year - Fall and Spring
- ☐ Twice a year - Fall and Winter
- ☐ Three times a year
- ☐ Every other year
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

* How much time will it take the average student to complete each administration of this assessment per subject?

- ☐ 1-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-60 minutes
- ☐ 61-90 minutes
- ☐ 91-120 minutes
- ☐ 121-150 minutes
- ☐ 151-180 minutes
- ☐ 181 minutes or more

* How will this assessment be administered? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Non-scantron paper and pencil
- ☐ Scantron
- ☐ Computer based
- ☐ Computer adaptive
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* How long will schools wait before receiving assessment results?

- ☐ Immediate results
- ☐ 24 hours
- ☐ 1-2 weeks
- ☐ 3-4 weeks
- ☐ 2-4 months
- ☐ 5 months or more
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* Will this assessment be administered as a result of your state Race To The Top grant or NCLB waiver application?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Appendix E. Examples of Other Mandated Assessments

Examples of Other Mandatory Assessments⁴⁵

21st Century Skills Technology Assessment	Developmental Reading Assessment
ACCESS	DIBELS
Achieve 3000	DIBELS and IDEL
Achievement Series - District EOC quarterlies	DIBELS/IDEL/CIRCLE
ACT	DIBELS/TRC
ACT EXPLORE	DIBELS/Burst
ACT PLAN	Digits
ACT Plus Writing	Discovery Education Benchmark
ACT Prep	Discovery Education - Launch into Teaching
ACT Quality Core	District Benchmark Assessments
ACT Ready	District Performance Assessments
ACT Writing	DISTRICT WIDE WORLD LANGUAGE
Acuity Algebra Test	PROFICIENCY EXAM
ADEPT	DSC
Agile Mind	EASYCBM
AIMSweb	ELDA
Algebra End of Course	End of Course Math Exams
Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT)	End of Year exams for all Art, Music, P.E., reading, math, and science courses
Amplify Benchmarks	EXAMINATION HIGH SCHOOL
ANET	FAIR
Aspire	FAST Early Reading
Aspire Early High School Test	FitnessGram
Assessment of Course Performance (ACP)	Formative Assessments (Snapshots) EdPlan
Basic Reading Inventory	Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Reading Assessment
Battelle	Foundation Reading Skills
Brigance 3-Year-Old Standards Assessment	Galileo
Brigance Number Operations Assessment	Gates MacGinite
Brigance Readiness Assessment	GENERAL SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS
Brigance Reading Comprehension Assessment	GRADE
Brigance Word Recognition Assessment	High School Proficiency A & E
C-PALLS (CIRCLE)	High Word Frequency Evaluation
Carnegie	History Writing Task
CBA	I-ELDA (Iowa English Language Development Assessment)
ccEngage	I-Ready Reading and Mathematics
CELDT	IDEL
CogAT 7	InView
Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills
Cumulative End of Unit Math Exams	ISIP
Degrees of Reading Power	Istation
Developmental Profile	

⁴⁵ Does not include mandated assessments that are unique to a state or district.

Student Testing in America's Great City Schools

ITBS—Grade 3	Scholastic Math Inventory
ITBS/Logramos	Scholastic Phonics Inventory
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment	Scholastic Reading Inventory
Language Other than English (LOTE) and Second	SchoolNet
Language Proficiency (SLP)	Science Instructional Reflection and Assessment
Language! Language Reading Scale	Semester exams for all courses for grades 6-12 (over
LAS Links	1,200 unique exams)
mClass Math	Significant Cognitive Disability Mathematics
mClass Circle	Assessment
Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project	Significant Cognitive Disability Reading Assessment
Measures of Academic Progress	Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT)
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	STAMP
NNAT2	Standards-Based Assessment
NWEA - MAP	STAR
NWEA - MPG	STAR Early Literacy
Optional Local Purpose Assessment	TCAP Portfolio Assessment
Oral Language Proficiency Test - Idea Proficiency	TERRA NOVA
Test (IPT)	Text-Level Assessments
PALS	Text Reading and Comprehension (TRC)
Performance Series Assessment	TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics &
Performance Tasks	Science Study)
Periodic Assessment Option	TPRI/Tejas Lee
Personal Finance Exam	TRC
PERT	Trends in International Mathematics and Science
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	Study (TIMSS)
Postsecondary Education Readiness Test	TS Gold
PPVT	Two-way Dual Language Non-target Norm
Primary Diagnostics	Referenced Test - Iowa/Logramos
Project Lead the Way End of Course assessments	Unit/Chapter Tests
PSAT	US Constitution Examination
Qualitycore	VPK Assessment
ReadiStep	Wechsler Nonverbal Abilities Test
RIAA - now NCSC	WIDA ACCESS
RISE	WIN Readiness assessments
Riverside Interim Assessment Running Records	WMLS-R
Running Records	Woodcock-Johnson/Battery
SAT	WorkKeys
SAT-10	World Language Multimode
SBAC Interim for ELA and Math	Write to Learn

Appendix F. Council of the Great City Schools

Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 68 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Its board of directors is composed of the superintendent of schools and one school board member from each member city. An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c) (3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in the improvement of leadership and instruction. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year; conducts research and studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in areas such as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, and technology. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961 and has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

Chair of the Board

Richard Carranza, Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District

Chair-elect of the Board

Felton Williams, School Board President
Long Beach Unified School District

Secretary/Treasurer

Kaya Henderson, Chancellor
District of Columbia Public Schools

Immediate Past Chair

Jumoke Hinton Hodge, School Board Member
Oakland Unified School District

Executive Director

Michael Casserly