



# The Future *of* Teacher Licensure Testing

Research and Development Meeting Recommendations

CCSSO offers sincere thanks to Evaluation Systems group of Pearson for providing the funding for this important conversation.

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May 8-10, 2008



## THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), a program of CCSSO, is a consortium of state education agencies and professional standards boards responsible for teacher licensing, and national educational organizations. It serves as a vehicle for states to collaborate on projects of mutual interest, most specifically efforts to improve the preparation, licensing, and ongoing professional development of teachers through standards-based reform. The work of INTASC is guided by one basic premise: An effective teacher must be able to integrate content knowledge with the specific strengths and needs of students to assure that all students learn and perform at high levels.

### COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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# INTRODUCTION

In May 2008, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) partnered with Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to host a research and development meeting on the future of teacher licensure testing. We invited chiefs, deputies, teacher licensing officials, professional standards board directors, business partners, and experts from across the country to participate in the conversation. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Explore what state officials need and want in new assessments for the licensing of teachers; and
- Bring together the resources of business and education to help improve teacher licensure testing within and across states.

The hope was that this initial discussion would guide CCSSO and its Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) in its teacher quality policymaking work with states and inform future development of assessment products and services that meet state needs. CCSSO is sharing the key recommendations from this meeting in the hope that they stimulate and lead to future collaborations among stakeholders as we work together to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher licensure system.

This policy brief outlines the key ideas and recommendations from the Research and Development meeting.

# CONTEXT

## TEACHER LICENSURE AND THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The Research and Development Meeting on the Future of Teacher Licensure Testing occurred as CCSSO was finalizing its new strategic plan to build a national education context for the next century. A key Council goal under its strategic plan is to advocate for a stronger role of chief state school officers in national policy and to bring states together in coalitions so they can leverage their work together and serve as leaders of reform.

The Council is focusing its efforts on four key levers of reform:

1. **Standards, Assessments, and Accountability**—The goal is two-fold: to identify a common core of state-led student standards that are clearer, fewer and higher and that would be voluntary for states to use, and to develop a framework of skills and competencies necessary for 21<sup>st</sup> century student success.
2. **Comprehensive Data Systems**—The goal is to expand the Council's State Education Data Center (SEDC), position it as the national data source for student performance data, and work directly with the U.S. Department of Education on filesharing between the EdFacts reporting system and SEDC. Another goal is to increase the capacity of states to share learning around data systems and bring those data conversations to the national level.
3. **Systems of Support for Student Learning**—The goal is to explore and re-think what supports for student learning should look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will involve more than incremental change and will examine how we can remove barriers of time, geography and resources to improve student learning. We have to embrace new learning models, including online or virtual models.
4. **System of Educator Development**—The goal is to develop a system of support for teachers and leaders along their career continuum from aspiring to retiring as they work toward a new 21<sup>st</sup> century collaborative and student-centered learning environment. A redesigned system of educator support means rethinking the entire system of recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring, licensing, professional development, and differentiated career pathways so that we have high quality effective educators at all levels that can improve the achievement of each and every child. The key leverage point for states in building this new system of educator development is teacher licensure, which was the focus of the May 2008 Research and Development Meeting.

Before we can begin systems change, we must understand the *why*, *what*, and *how* of what we are trying to do. At the Research and Development Meeting, Karen Cator of Apple provided the following overview:

### Why do we need systems change?

The new imperative is that students need 21<sup>st</sup> century skills because the world has changed—we have global competition, global interdependence (no borders between countries any more), a different and more innovative workplace environment, a context in which information is ubiquitous and in which we cannot keep up with all the content (if we try to focus on content we will miss other skills), and a stronger imperative to engage ALL kids who are much more diverse today and who are dropping out because they do not see the relevance of school.

### What we are trying to do?

We are trying to move students to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, which includes not only core academic content but skills such as global awareness (which is more than learning a second language), creativity, innovation, communication, media literacy, and problem solving.

### How are we going to do it?

Our challenge is to create an environment so students can learn these skills. We need an environment with less locus of control, one in which students do more and teachers do less. We must clearly articulate our learning goals and then let students drop projects in to this. We need to look at how we can use technology to help us accomplish our goals. The benefits of technology include that: it provides a forum for students and teachers to engage each other; it can make complex processes more visual; it provides accessibility by providing the opportunity to engage different learning preferences; it can increase feedback loops to students, teachers, and parents; it can extend the reach of experts through virtual teaching; and finally technology allows us to publish to and interact with a worldwide audience.

In addition, much of the framework of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is based on teamwork or an approach that uses combinations of people to solve problems so collaboration skills will be required of everyone.

The challenge of implementation becomes how do we clear away the clutter in public education and keep our focus on the instructional core (student/teacher/content relationship). The key questions for teacher licensure become: what do teachers need to know and be able to do in this context and how should we assess their performance?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***What are some key areas of knowledge and skill that teachers need for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment?***

In response to this question, attendees identified the following key ideas, (which are not comprehensive), that overall, teachers should be able to model what the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills look like so this means in their teaching they should be able to:

**The new imperative is that students need 21<sup>st</sup> century skills because the world has changed...**

- move from lecture to engagement
- scaffold cognitive learning
- build metacognition skills
- focus on high quality intellectual tasks
- use effective formative assessment
- nurture reflective practice

Some other key areas of knowledge and skill include:

- Technology literacy—the teacher should know how to integrate technology into pedagogical strategies across the curriculum.
- Diversity—the teacher should have the ability to help students see different perspectives across different cultures and situations, including strategies for teaching English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Collaboration skills—the teacher should be able to model collaboration as teamwork is becoming the preferred method of working in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Global awareness—the teacher should have an understanding of other nations and cultures, including familiarity with a world language other than English.

### ***What are the elements of teacher licensure testing for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?***

Attendees identified the following key design principles they would like to see in a 21<sup>st</sup> century system of teacher licensure testing.

- The system should consist of a continuum of performance-based assessments over the career of the teacher that:
  - ◆ includes multiple points of assessment with multiple measures over time
  - ◆ evaluates performance in authentic or real settings
  - ◆ incorporates 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
  - ◆ is formative, summative and cumulative
  - ◆ integrates technology (including an option to complete the assessment online)
  - ◆ provides a feedback loop to teachers to inform their individual professional development and to teacher preparation providers to improve their programs
  - ◆ includes an entry level assessment that is diagnostic and informs preparation programs of a candidate's strengths and needs
  - ◆ includes measures of
    - ✦ literacy/numeracy
    - ✦ content
    - ✦ pedagogy
    - ✦ actual classroom performance
    - ✦ dispositions (e.g., flexibility, cross cultural skills, leadership, collaboration)
    - ✦ ethics or professional code of conduct
  - ◆ provides feedback to candidates who do not pass the licensing assessment so they know where to focus their remedial efforts

**The system should consist of a continuum of performance-based assessments over the career of the teacher that includes multiple points of assessment with multiple measures over time.**

## ***What are some key issues to consider in building this assessment system?***

Attendees brainstormed the following challenges:

- Cost—one option for addressing the high costs of developing these assessments is regional grouping of states to share expenses.
- Definition of performance—we need to define what performance looks like (quality of practice) at each stage of a teacher’s career.
- Training—who evaluates and scores the assessment and how do we ensure validity and reliability, particularly with performance items?
- Item bank—how will performance items developed and stored?
- Test security—how are items kept secure in a performance-based continuum system?
  - Role of school leader and school culture—support for the assessment system must exist at the local level. How can we promote this?
  - Technology—a key challenge for schools is to keeping up with advances in technology. How can we provide appropriate technology and how will it be funded?
  - Career and technical education—we need to keep in mind how these teachers come into the profession (multiple pathways) and the impact of updated teacher standards will have on them.
- Local evaluation systems—how will they fit in with a continuum of assessment system and the multiple roles and responsibilities of state and local staff?
- Pay for performance programs—how will these fit into a continuum of assessment system?

**We need to define what performance looks like (quality of practice) at each stage of a teacher’s career.**

## ***What are next steps that CCSSO can take to begin building this assessment system?***

Below are attendee’s ideas organized into key themes. Next steps include:

### **Coordinate Efforts and Disseminate Information**

- Convene a multi-state collaboration to address this topic. INTASC could help move these ideas forward.
- Create the imperative for a set of action steps in the area of teacher effectiveness and teacher quality. We need to move from a sense of urgency to an imperative.
- Influence the legislative agenda under No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) reauthorization so it targets more resources for teacher quality.
- Coordinate and disseminate what is going on in other states on the issue of teacher licensure and testing. Create a framework of various state strategies and their link to research.
- Continue to convene state education agencies nationally and/or regionally for common actions on cross-state issues such as teacher license portability.
- Identify regional collaboratives that are working with institutions of higher education in writing teacher standards and performance assessments.
- Create an inventory of state teacher standards and make them available as a resource to states that are rewriting their standards.
- Lead an examination of what we can learn internationally from other countries on the teacher issue, and how we can link international work to our teacher standards.
- Bring futurists into the discussion, particularly around technology issues.
- Begin the stakeholder buy-in process by bringing in higher education, national associations, and the teacher unions to build linkages across the teacher continuum.

### **Update the INTASC Model Teacher Standards**

- “Refresh” the model core standards so they reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning context.
- Use the updated standards as a leverage tool to drive change of the system, including performance assessments.

- Work with researchers to determine if we can separate out the novice from the master level and identify the critical indicators for these pre-requisite skills, which will help reduce the number of teacher standards.
- Infuse the use of technology throughout the INTASC Standards and use business partners to help define this.

### Assist States in Developing Teacher Standards and Performance Assessments

- Lead focused work in states to share the cost of developing a continuum of assessments and collecting data around this work. Involve business partners in this endeavor.
- Provide external reviews of state teacher standards and assessments and provide feedback to state education agencies.
- Assist states in determining how to link the teacher standards and performance assessments to alternative route programs and the impact of the assessment on non-traditional programs.

**Expand and incorporate knowledge, skills, and resources from business partners to support building the teacher licensure system.**

### Include Business Partners

- Expand and incorporate knowledge, skills, and resources from business partners to support building the teacher licensure system.
- Work with business partners to examine state-driven policies and the impact of assessment development on non-traditional programs.
- Involve business partners in career and technical education initiatives.

## NEXT STEPS

William Gorth, CEO of Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, summarized by saying the challenge now is to define the tasks related to teacher licensure across the whole continuum of the teacher's career. He noted we may need a different assessment at each stage of a teacher's career to measure the appropriate level of performance. We have one step ready to begin and that is the revision of the INTASC model core teacher standards. CCSSO has an opportunity to lead this discussion as we move forward to the next stage.

Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of CCSSO, said the Council will work immediately on the vision piece of this work particularly in identifying the critical elements of an educator continuum with the goal of providing a roadmap for states in building an educator support system. Specific next steps include:

- Early in 2009, CCSSO will convene a taskforce of chiefs to begin drafting a policy statement on educator development and the educator continuum.
- Early in 2009, CCSSO will convene a committee to update the INTASC model core standards so they reflect an alignment with 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge skills with input from experts and key stakeholders.
- CCSSO will also take the opportunity to influence the thinking around reauthorization of NCLB, particularly on the teacher quality issues. Bipartisan support exists for creating a new working partnership with states around key issues like teacher policy.
- CCSSO will build on and continue this conversation around performance-based assessments for teachers. The models developed by Connecticut and California in this area are pioneering efforts and provide a nucleus of work for our conversation. What we need is a demonstrated measure of teacher effectiveness and a design that is cost effective.
- In terms of partnerships, CCSSO will continue to work to bring business, K-12, higher education, and a wide range of key stakeholders together around this work.

## Research and Development Attendees

**Stuart Bennett**, Chief Deputy State Superintendent, Georgia Department of Education

**Bob Bickerton**, Senior Associate Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Wesley Bruce**, Assistant Superintendent, Indiana Department of Education

**Cheryl Carrier**, Program Director, Ford Motor Company Fund

**Karen Cator**, Director, Education Leadership, Apple, Inc.

**Kathryn Cox**, Superintendent of Schools, Georgia Department of Education

**Richard Delano**, Marketing Director, LifeCourse Associates

**Sydnee Dickson**, Director, Educator Quality and Licensing, Utah State Office of Education

**Mary Diez**, Dean, Graduate Studies, Alverno College

**Michael Flanagan**, Superintendent, Michigan Department of Education

**Susan Gendron**, Commissioner of Education, Maine Department of Education

**Ted Gillispie**, Executive Director, Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation

**Arlene Hett**, Past Director of Professional Education and Certification, Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

**T. Kenneth James**, Commissioner of Education, Arkansas Department of Education

**Judy Jeffrey**, Director, Iowa Department of Education

**Patricia Magruder**, National Fellow, Institute for Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research Development Center

**Alan Morgan**, Vice President for Government Relations, Pearson Inc.

**Janice Poda**, Deputy Superintendent, South Carolina Department of Education

**Alexa Posny**, Commissioner of Education, Kansas Department of Education

**Nancy Pugliese**, Bureau Chief, Connecticut Department of Education

**Suellen Reed**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana Department of Education

**Phillip Rogers**, Executive Director, Education Professional Standards Board

**Abby Smith**, Project Manager, Pennsylvania Department of Education

**Marilyn Troyer**, Senior Associate Superintendent, Ohio Department of Education

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This policy brief along with a detailed summary of the proceedings and accompanying resources are available online at: [http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Interstate\\_New\\_Teacher\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Support\\_Consortium/Projects/The\\_Future\\_of\\_Teacher\\_Licensure\\_Testing\\_Research\\_and\\_Development\\_Meeting](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Interstate_New_Teacher_Assessment_and_Support_Consortium/Projects/The_Future_of_Teacher_Licensure_Testing_Research_and_Development_Meeting)